# The Buddha: The Emptiness of the Heart

Talks on Zen
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## The Buddha: The Emptiness of the Heart

### Chapter #1

Chapter title: The emptiness of the heart
8 September 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
BUKKO SAID:
TAKING THINGS EASILY AND WITHOUT FORCING, AFTER SOME TIME THE RUSH OF THOUGHT, OUTWARD AND INWARD, SUBSIDES NATURALLY, AND THE TRUE FACE SHOWS ITSELF.
... NOW BODY AND MIND, FREE FROM ALL MOTIVATIONS, ALWAYS APPEAR AS VOID AND ABSOLUTE SAMENESS, SHINING LIKE THE BRIGHTNESS OF HEAVEN, AT THE CENTER OF THE VAST EXPANSE OF PHENOMENAL THINGS, AND NEEDING NO POLISHING OR CLEANING. THIS IS BEYOND ALL CONCEPTS, BEYOND BEING AND NON-BEING.
LEAVE YOUR INNUMERABLE KNOWINGS AND SEEINGS AND UNDERSTANDINGS, AND GO TO THAT GREATNESS OF SPACE. WHEN YOU COME

TO THAT VASTNESS, THERE IS NO SPECK OF BUDDHISM IN YOUR HEART, AND WHEN THERE IS NO SPECK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT YOU, YOU WILL HAVE THE TRUE SIGHT OF BUDDHAS AND PATRIARCHS.
THE TRUE NATURE IS LIKE THE IMMENSITY OF SPACE WHICH CONTAINS ALL THINGS. WHEN YOU CAN GO AND COME IN ALL REGIONS EQUALLY, WHEN THERE IS NOTHING SPECIALLY YOURS, NO WITHIN AND NO WITHOUT, WHEN YOU CONFORM TO HIGH AND CONFORM TO LOW, CONFORM TO THE SQUARE AND CONFORM TO THE ROUND, THAT IS IT.
THE EMPTINESS OF THE SEA ALLOWS WAVES TO RISE; THE EMPTINESS OF THE MOUNTAIN VALLEY MAKES THE VOICE ECHO; THE EMPTINESS OF THE HEART MAKES THE BUDDHA. WHEN YOU EMPTY THE HEART, THINGS APPEAR AS IN A MIRROR, SHINING THERE WITHOUT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM. LIFE AND DEATH AN ILLUSION, ALL THE BUDDHAS ARE ONE'S OWN BODY.
ZEN IS NOT SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS; IT IS JUST HITTING AND PIERCING THROUGH. IF YOU CUT OFF ALL DOUBTS, THE COURSE OF LIFE-AND-DEATH IS CUT OFF NATURALLY. I ASK YOU ALL: DO YOU SEE IT OR DON'T YOU? -- HOW IN JUNE THE SNOW MELTS FROM THE TOP OF MOUNT FUJI.

Maneesha, Bukko has come to the ultimate expression of the experience of one's own being. Very rarely has a master

succeeded to such a point as Bukko has in his statements. Listen carefully, because rarely will you meet a Bukko again.

BUKKO SAID:

TAKING THINGS EASILY AND WITHOUT FORCING, AFTER SOME TIME THE RUSH OF THOUGHT, OUTWARD AND INWARD, SUBSIDES NATURALLY, AND THE TRUE FACE SHOWS ITSELF.

That's what I have been telling you. To be a buddha is not a difficult job. It is not some achievement for which you need a Nobel Prize. It is the easiest thing in the world, because it has already happened without your knowing.

The buddha is already breathing in you. Just a little recognition, just a little turning inwards... and that has not to be done forcibly. If you do it forcibly you will miss the point. It is very delicate. You have to look inward playfully, not seriously. That's what he means by "taking things easily." Don't take anything seriously.

Existence is very easy. You have got your life without any effort, you are living your life without any effort. You are breathing perfectly well without being reminded; your heartbeat continues even in your sleep -- so easy is existence with you! But you are not so easy with existence. You are very close-fisted. You want everything to be turned into an achievement.

Enlightenment cannot be an achievement. That which you have already -- how can it be an achievement? The authentic master simply takes away things which you don't have and you believe you have, and he gives you that which you already have. You are having many things which you don't have at all, you just believe that you have

them. The master's function is that of a surgeon, to cut all that is not you and leave behind just the essential core -- the eternal being.

It is a very easy phenomenon; you can do it on your own. There are no problems and no risk in taking things easily, but people take things very tensely. They take things very seriously, and that spoils the whole game.

And remember, life is a game. Once you understand it as a game, a deep playfulness arises on its own accord. The victory is not the point; the point is to play totally, joyously, dancingly.

What is called playfulness is very essential in the inquiry of your own being.

TAKING THINGS EASILY, SAYS BUKKO, AND WITHOUT FORCING, AFTER SOME TIME THE RUSH OF THOUGHT, OUTWARD AND INWARD, SUBSIDES NATURALLY, AND THE TRUE FACE SHOWS ITSELF.

When I say to you that meditation is nothing but thoughtlessness, you can misunderstand me. You are not to do anything to become thoughtless, because whatever you will do will be again a thought. You have to learn to see the procession of thoughts, standing by the side of the road as if it does not matter to you what is passing by. Just the ordinary traffic -- if you can take your thoughts in such a manner that they are not of much concern, then easily, slowly, the caravan of thoughts which has continued for thousands of years disappears.

You have to understand a simple thing, that giving attention is giving nourishment. If you don't give any attention but remain unconcerned, the thoughts start dying on their own.

They don't have any other way to get energy, any other source of life. You are their energy, and because you go on giving them attention, seriously, you think it is very difficult to be free from thought. It is the easiest thing in the world, but it has to be done in the right way.
The right way is just to stand by the side. The traffic goes on -- let it go. Don't make any judgment of good and bad; don't appreciate, don't condemn. That is what is meant by being easy. It is all okay.
WITHOUT FORCING... and that is something that has to be remembered, because our natural tendency is that if we have to become thoughtless, why not force the thoughts? Why not throw them out? But by the very act of forcing them, you are giving them energy, you are giving them nourishment, you are taking note of them and you are making them important -- so important that without throwing them, you cannot meditate.
Just try to throw out any single thought, and you will see how difficult it is. The more you throw it the more it bounces back! It will enjoy the game very much, and you are going to be defeated finally. You have taken a wrong route.

I have always told an ancient Tibetan story....
A young man was very much interested in the esoteric, in the mysterious. He found a saint who was known to have many secrets, but it was very difficult to get any secret from him. The young man said, "I will see. I will devote my whole life to his service, and I will get the secrets, the mysteries."

So he remained with the old saint. The old saint told him, "You are unnecessarily wasting your time. I don't have anything, I am just a poor old soul. Because I don't speak, people think I am keeping some secret. But I don't have anything to say, so I remain silent."

But the man said, "I cannot be persuaded so easily. You will have to give me the secret which opens the door of all the mysteries."

Tired of the young man, because twenty-four hours a day he was there... the poor old saint had to arrange for his food, had to ask somebody to take care for his clothes; the winter was coming and he would need more clothes. It had become a burden. Finally the old man got fed up. He told the young fellow, "Today I am going to tell you the secret. It is not very difficult. It is very simple."

In Tibet there is a common mantra which religious people repeat: Om mani padme hum. He said, "Everything is hidden in this."

But the young man said, "Don't befool me! Everybody knows this mantra, it is not a secret. It is the most widely known mantra to the Tibetans."

He said, "It is true, it is widely known. But the key is not known to them for opening it. Do you know the key for opening it?"

The young man said, "Key? I have never heard that there is a key to open a mantra."

"That is the secret! The key is, while you are repeating the mantra -- just for five minutes -- just don't let any monkey pop into your head."

He said, "You seem to be an old idiot! In my whole life I have never thought of a monkey. Why should I think of one?"
He rushed down the stairs of the temple where the old saint lived. But strangely, even though he was not reciting the mantra, monkeys started coming, giggling. He would close his eyes and they would be there. He would run to this side and they would be there. They were not outside, they were inside his head. And slowly slowly the crowd was becoming bigger. As far as he could see, only monkeys and monkeys, and doing all kinds of circus!
He said, "My god, this is the key? I am finished! I have not even started the mantra."
Finally he said, "Let me take a good bath and get rid of all these monkeys." But the more he pushed them away, the more they jumped towards him. He took the bath, he burned incense, he sat in a religious lotus posture, but whatever he was doing, monkeys were watching from every side. He said, "It is strange -- monkeys have never visited this house..." The whole night he tried, but he could not repeat this simple mantra Om mani padme hum without monkeys jumping in.
By the morning he was so tired. He said, "This old saint, I will kill him! What kind of key...?" In the morning he rushed to the old saint and said, "Please take away your key. I am almost mad!"
The old man said, "That's why I was not telling anybody, because the key is very difficult. Now do you understand why I was silent?"

He said, "I don't want to listen to a single word from you. You just take this key back and let me go home. And I don't want these monkeys to follow me!"
The saint said, "If you give back the key, never repeat the mantra again. The monkeys will come! I cannot help it, they are not in my power."
The man dropped the mantra, he dropped the key. He descended the same steps and there was no monkey at all. He closed his eyes and there was no monkey. He looked all around and there was no monkey. He said, "It is strange..." He tried just once on the way, to see what happens when he says Om mani padme hum and closes his eyes. And they were all coming, from all directions!

You cannot repress any thought. The very repressive process gives it energy, life, strength. And it weakens you because you become a defeated partner in the game. The easiest thing is not to force but to be just a witness. If a monkey comes, let him come. Just say "Hello!" and he will go. But don't tell him to go. Just be a witness that a monkey has come, or a thousand monkeys have come. What does it matter? It is none of your business. They may be going to some gathering, some religious festival, so let them go. It is none of your concern. And soon the crowd will disappear, seeing that "the man is not interested."
All your thoughts are in the same category. Never force any thought to go away; otherwise it will rebound with greater energy. And the energy is yours! You are on a self-defeating track. The more you throw it away the more it will come back.

Hence, what Bukko is saying is the only way -- I say the only way -- to be thoughtless: don't pay any attention. Just remain silently watching all kinds of things... monkeys and elephants, let them pass. Soon you will find an empty road, and when you find an empty road, you have found an empty mind -- naturally. Everything outward and inward subsides and there is the tremendous silence which easiness brings.

NOW BODY AND MIND, FREE FROM ALL MOTIVATIONS, ALWAYS APPEAR AS VOID AND ABSOLUTE SAMENESS.

When you are in the state of no-mind, which is equivalent to thoughtlessness... when there is no thought cloud moving in your mind, you attain to the clarity of no-mind.

Mind is simply a combination of all the thoughts, of all the clouds. Mind has no independent nature of its own. When all the thoughts are gone and the sky is clean and clear, you will see that everything that you have paid so much attention to is nothing but emptiness. Your thoughts were all empty. They contained nothing, they were void. Whatever you thought they contained was your own energy. You have withdrawn your energy -- just the empty shell of the thought falls down. You have withdrawn your identity and immediately the thought is no longer alive. It was your identity that was giving it life force.

And strangely enough, you thought that your thoughts were very strong and it was difficult to get rid of them! You were making them strong, you were cultivating them. Just by forcing them, you were getting into a fix.

I agree with Bukko. I have agreed out of my own experience that you can simply sit or lie down and let the

thoughts pass by. They will not leave even a trace. Just don't get interested... and don't be DISinterested either, just be neutral. To be neutral is to be easy, and to be neutral is to take back the very life force that you have given to your thoughts.
Suddenly, a man of no thought becomes so full of energy -- energy which he had spread into the thoughts unnecessarily. He was weak because he was nourishing thoughts, which leads nowhere. They promise -- thoughts are politicians. They promise great things to come, but the moment they have power, they forget all their promises. This has been going on for centuries.
Those promises are just seductive. Your thoughts are promising you many things: "You can be this, you can be that." And they drive you, they give you motivation to become the greatest leader in the world, to become the richest man in the world. They drive you into ambitions, they become your masters. It is one of the weirdest phenomena that the servants become masters, and the master becomes just a servant. The moment you take your energy back you become a tremendous force, gathered in your own being and center.

This is the first and the most important thing to understand: never force anything, just let it go easily. If you ever want to find out what the secret of your life is, then you have to go inwards. And thoughts are always going outwards; every thought takes you outwards. When all thoughts cease, there is nowhere to go -- you simply are at home.
This at-homeness is meditation.
Utter silence and peace prevails.

In this silence every ambition seems to be stupid; the whole world of objects seems to be nothing but a dream. And your own being shines in its BRIGHTNESS OF HEAVEN, AT THE CENTER OF THE VAST EXPANSE OF PHENOMENAL THINGS, AND NEEDING NO POLISHING OR CLEANING.

Your own being is so pure, so unpolluted, not even a particle of dust has ever reached there -- cannot reach. Only your consciousness can reach there, and consciousness arises in you with no-mind. With no-mind you become so wakeful, so watchful -- nowhere to go outside, because all thoughts are gone. So you turn inwards, and for the first time face your own original being.

THIS IS BEYOND ALL CONCEPTS...

What you are going to face in your meditation is beyond all concepts.

This is a very pregnant statement.

... BEYOND BEING AND NON-BEING. We are using the word `being' because you will not be able to understand, while your thoughts are there, that something beyond being and beyond non-being is in existence within you. But when thoughts are gone, the first encounter is with a being, an individual being, bright and clean. And as you enter this being, you find yourself going beyond your individuality into the universal, which is beyond being and non-being. This is what ultimate enlightenment is. And Bukko has put it in the simplest possible way.

LEAVE YOUR INNUMERABLE KNOWINGS AND SEEINGS AND UNDERSTANDINGS, AND GO TO THAT GREATNESS OF SPACE. WHEN YOU COME

TO THAT VASTNESS, THERE IS NO SPECK OF BUDDHISM IN YOUR HEART.

He is really a great master. His love towards Buddha is great, but that does not mean that he is a follower of Buddha. He is saying that when you enter into this great space, you will not find anything -- NO SPECK OF BUDDHISM even in your heart. AND WHEN THERE IS NO SPECK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT YOU -- you will not know anything, even about yourself -- YOU WILL HAVE THE TRUE SIGHT OF THE BUDDHAS and the great masters.

Buddha himself had a great difficulty. Perhaps no man has had such a great difficulty in explaining his experience. In this country, the self, atma, has been considered to be the ultimate experience. The two other religions of this country, Hinduism and Jainism, have both emphasized that to know your self is all, there is nothing beyond it. Now, Buddha was going against all of India's traditions by saying that the self is only a door to no-self. Don't stop at the door, it is a bridge to be passed. Don't make your house on the bridge because a vaster universe is ready to welcome you if you can leave this small idea of your self.

What is this self that you carry, that all the traditions of this country and other countries think so much of? Hundreds of philosophers came to Gautam Buddha, saying, "What you are saying goes against the VEDAS, against the UPANISHADS."

He said, "What can I do? It is my own experience, I cannot deny it. The self has to be transcended; only then you become one with the universe. The dewdrop has to disappear into the ocean."

Why cling to the dewdrop?
What are you gaining by it?
Have you ever observed? -- all the religions teach that you should liberate yourself from misery, from sin. You should earn virtue so that you can make a place in paradise. "You" are the center of all the religions -- but not of Zen.
All the religions say, "Liberate yourself from your attachments." Only Zen has the strange courage to say, "Liberate yourself from yourself!" Liberating yourself from your attachments is child's play. The real, authentic seeker finally liberates himself not only from other things but even from himself. He drops the very idea that `I am'.
Existence is.
Looked at from this viewpoint, it can be said that you are the center of all misery. And however you try, you will find you are only changing misery, from one misery to another misery. Maybe in the gap you feel a little light. From one marriage to another marriage -- just in the meantime, while you have to wait, you feel good. But this goodness is not going to last, you are already filling in the form for another marriage.
You are the problem.
All other problems are just your children -- a bus load of children, and you are the driver.
Buddhism, particularly, introduced the idea that it is not a question of dropping this greed, that anger, this passion, that possession. The question is of dropping yourself completely, disappearing into the universal energy from where we have arisen.
In India, Buddha was not understood. I am experiencing the same thing. In India I am not understood, because India

has, for ten thousand years or more, believed in the self as the ultimate value.

Self is not the ultimate value. What are you going to do with the self when you find it? Just sitting stupidly, looking weird to everybody. Just for a moment think: You have found your self, now what are you going to do? And remember, once you have found it, you cannot escape from it. It clings like German glue! It is not Indian glue....

Buddha took a tremendous step in the world of consciousness when he said, "The self is only a stepping stone. Step beyond it! And going beyond it, you are just empty."

But this "empty" is not nothingness. The word that Buddha used has been translated either as "emptiness" or as "nothingness," but in English both words have a negative connotation. Buddha's word was shunyata. It is not a negative phenomenon.

Bukko gives it perhaps the best expression I have come across:

WHEN YOU CAN GO AND COME IN ALL REGIONS EQUALLY, WHEN THERE IS NOTHING SPECIALLY YOURS, NO WITHIN, NO WITHOUT, WHEN YOU CONFORM TO HIGH AND CONFORM TO LOW, CONFORM TO THE SQUARE AND CONFORM TO THE ROUND, THAT IS IT.

When you are simply available, with no self, you don't have any boundaries anymore. Without boundaries you can conform to anything.

THE EMPTINESS OF THE SEA ALLOWS WAVES TO RISE...

And your emptiness will also allow waves of blissfulness, peacefulness, splendor and unknown glory. You are at the highest peak available to any consciousness. But all these are still waves according to Bukko. That's why I say he has made a great statement.

THE EMPTINESS OF THE SEA ALLOWS WAVES TO RISE; THE EMPTINESS OF THE MOUNTAIN VALLEY MAKES THE VOICE ECHO...

It is empty; otherwise how can it echo the voice?

Just nearby in Matheran, there is an echo point. A very clear echo point -- I have seen other echo points in other mountains also. Whatever you say it simply repeats, the whole valley. If you bark like a dog, the whole valley barks like a dog. If you sing a song, the whole valley sings the song. Its emptiness allows it to conform to anything.

And Bukko is saying that when you are utterly empty of being and no-being, of mind and no-mind... When you are just merged into the universal it can be said from one side that you are empty, but from the other side you are so full that now you can conform to anything. You can be the moon, you can be the rose, you can be the clouds. Or you can just remain the empty sky.

For the first time you are free to be anything you want. For the first time your emptiness allows you to experience existence from different angles.

It is a vast phenomenon. We know only small parts of it because our self-ness creates a boundary. We cannot go beyond the boundary.

THE EMPTINESS OF THE HEART MAKES THE BUDDHA.

Once your heart is empty, you are the buddha -- serene, silent, utterly blissful, at home. When I say to you that you are a buddha, I mean it. It is just that you have to recover from your dreams, afflictions, addictions. You just have to penetrate deeply to the point where even the self starts disappearing and the door opens to the vast, to the infinite. To be a buddha is the ultimate experience of joy, of eternity, of immortality, freedom and liberation.
And nobody else can do it for you. It is simple: you have to do it yourself.
WHEN YOU EMPTY THE HEART, THINGS APPEAR AS IN A MIRROR, SHINING THERE WITHOUT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM. LIFE AND DEATH AN ILLUSION, ALL THE BUDDHAS ARE ONE'S OWN BODY.
ZEN IS NOT SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS; IT IS JUST HITTING AND PIERCING THROUGH.

I am reminded... A great industrialist had imported a totally new, sophisticated machine. It worked so beautifully, a hundred times more productive than the older one, but one day it stopped. Nobody knew what to do.
The manufacturers were informed, and they said, "We can send our man. But his fee is ten thousand dollars plus all traveling expenses."
The industrialist was losing thousands of dollars every day. He agreed; he said, "Send him immediately, right now."
The man came from the airport and without wasting a single moment, he took from his handbag a small hammer and hit the machine at a certain point and it started working.

The owner of the factory said, "But this is too much! Ten thousand dollars just for hitting it with this little hammer?" The expert said, "No, for hitting with the hammer just one dollar will do. The real thing is knowing where to hit."

It is true, ZEN IS NOT SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS. IT IS JUST HITTING AND PIERCING THROUGH.
But don't believe in Bukko. The point is where to hit. It is not mysterious, but the problem is where to hit. Once you hit at the right time, at the right place, it is really very simple; there is nothing mysterious about it.
That's what I have been continuously trying to get you to experience, because there is no way to tell you where to hit. Everybody has to find the place by going deeper into himself, seeing where the light is coming from, where the life is coming from, and then moving in that direction without any fear. This is what he means by "hitting and piercing through."
Then don't stop. It will be very beautiful. Even in the beginning, the moment you see your light, your life source, it will have a tremendous beauty and there will be a desire to stop, that you have arrived. Don't do that. Much more lies ahead. Until you are finished completely... when you look all around and you don't find yourself -- that is the goal. This beyond is the buddha.
IF YOU CUT OFF ALL DOUBTS, THE COURSE OF LIFE-AND-DEATH IS CUT OFF NATURALLY.
I ASK YOU ALL: DO YOU SEE IT OR DON'T YOU? -- HOW IN JUNE THE SNOW MELTS FROM THE TOP OF MOUNT FUJI.

He is saying that just as in June the snow starts melting from Mount Fuji... so simply, without making any fuss. As June comes, the snow does not say, "Wait a little, I am engaged in something else and I have to wait a little." No -- no resistance, no delaying, no postponing. As June comes, the snow starts melting.
So when you reach to the point where you feel, "this is my center," then start melting. Your June has come. Then start melting and disappearing. Your very disappearance is making you the whole universe.
Buddha has said, "When I disappeared, I saw stars within me, sun rising, sunset, full-moon nights -- everything within me, not without me. It was my boundary that had been keeping them out. Now the boundary is no more; everything has fallen in. Now I am the whole."

At the time of his death the Zen monk, Guin, wrote:
ALL DOCTRINES SPLIT ASUNDER
ZEN TEACHING CAST AWAY --
FOURSCORE YEARS AND ONE.
THE SKY NOW CRACKS AND FALLS
THE EARTH CLEAVES OPEN --
IN THE HEART OF THE FIRE
LIES A HIDDEN SPRING.
When all is dropping and disappearing, in the heart of all this disappearance is hidden your spring. From this point you will start growing new flowers that you have never seen before.

Question 1
Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
IN THE WEST, THEY SAY THAT LOVE -- TWO FULL HEARTS -- MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND. JUDGING BY THE CASUALTY RATE, FULL HEARTS DON'T SEEM TO BE THE ANSWER.
WHAT IS THE WORLD OF THE EMPTY HEART OF ZEN?

In the first place, whatever is said in the West, that "love -- two full hearts -- makes the world go round" is all nonsense. Whether you are here or not, the world will continue to go round.
And two hearts full of love... where are you going to find them?
The world would have stopped long ago if it were dependent on two hearts full of love. Even to find one heart is very difficult; two is too much! But those are just mass-mind oriented proverbs, not statements of a man like Bukko.
When Bukko says the empty heart is the buddha, he is talking about a very authentic experience. And it does not depend on anybody else.
Love is both, a joy and a misery, because two are involved. Wherever there is duality, there is going to be conflict. You can put the conflict aside for a few days on the honeymoon, but after the honeymoon the conflict arises on every point. What kind of curtains? -- and immediately there are two voices. What kind of carpets, and what kind of literature, what kind of furniture? On every point you will find that those great lovers are in absolute disagreement! There is the beginning of real love, which always ends in divorce.

The world of religion is not the world of duality. It is a world of oneness. You have to find your own heart, utterly empty, empty of all rubbish. And when your heart is empty of all rubbish, you are the buddha. There is no other experience which goes beyond it.

Now before you become buddhas, a few laughs, because a few may come back, a few may not come back. Those who come back will celebrate, but for those who will not come back from this great inner journey, some laughs as a goodbye....

Kowalski and Olga are making love in the upstairs bedroom. Just as Kowalski is about to start up his machinery, they hear a loud banging noise downstairs.
"What's that?" asks Olga, jumping up in bed.
"Nothing," pants Kowalski. "Come on, let's get on with it!"
"No! No way!" demands Olga. "No lovemaking until you find out what is going on downstairs."
Poor Kowalski stumbles downstairs with a very large erection, and flips on the the lights.
Suddenly, the cat jumps out of the window. The dog dives under the sofa. And the parrot, trapped in its cage, looks around frantically, then tucks one leg under its wing and screams, "Wait! Wait, you silly Polack... you wouldn't fuck a cripple would you?"

Terrence and Mrs. Tuber, the TV Couch Potatoes, are propped up on their potato couch, chewing peanuts and

watching their favorite soap opera "The Potato Family" on television.
When the doorbell rings, Chip the dog starts barking, and Terrence looks around at it and accidentally pops a peanut into his ear. He is still sitting on his potato couch with his head tipped to one side, trying to get the peanut out, when his daughter and her boyfriend Frito walk in.
Frito immediately sees the situation and offers to help Terrence to get the peanut out.
"Look," says Frito, "I'll cover your mouth, stick my two fingers into your nostrils and then blow into your other ear."
In desperation, Terrence agrees to give this a try. Frito stuffs his fingers tightly into the couch potato's nose and blows into his ear. Sure enough, the peanut pops out the other side.
Later that evening, Terrence and Mrs. Tuber are propped up in bed watching a re-run of "The Potato Family" on television, when Mrs. Tuber asks her husband, "That Frito is such a nice boy, what do you think he will do when he leaves school?"
"I don't know what his plans are," replies Terrence. "But from the smell of his fingers, I think he will probably be our son-in-law."

"Hey man," says Swami Haridas to his friend, Stonehead Niskriya, "how come you got home so early from your date with Papaya Pineapple last night?"
"Well," explains Stonehead, "after dinner we went back to her apartment. We sat on her bed listening to music, talked for a while, and drank some herb tea. Then she slowly

undressed, pulled back the bed covers, lay down, reached over me, and turned out the light."
"So?" asks Haridas. "What happened?"
"Well, I can take a hint," replies Stonehead. "So I went home!"

Nivedano...
(Gibberish)
Nivedano...

Be silent. Close your eyes. Feel your body to be frozen; gather all your life energy inwards and look in.
Deeper and deeper.
Find the center of your being.
Finding the center of your being is the door that leads you beyond yourself, that makes you a buddha.

Be well acquainted with this new space you are in, because you have to carry the buddha twenty-four hours -- in your gestures, in your actions, in your words, in your silence, waking or sleeping.
If one can remain with this silence, then there is no need to follow any discipline, any virtue. Everything will happen on its own accord, spontaneously.
And when things happen spontaneously they have a beauty of their own.
It is a blissful moment.
You are dissolved
into an oceanic consciousness,
you are at home,

realizing that which you have carried since the very beginning, for thousands of lives, but have never looked into it...
never searched for it, have taken it for granted.
It is the most precious treasure in you.
It is the whole universe falling in you.

Nivedano, to make it clear...

Relax, and just watch the body, the mind.
You remain a watcher.
Just a watcher.

Your body is born and dies.
Your mind every moment changes.
Only this watcher is your eternity.
Remember it.
Remind yourself of it.
And slowly slowly make it your ordinary, simple life experience, just like breathing. You don't have to make any effort.
When your buddha is that spontaneous,
you have found the truth.

Nivedano...

Come back, and bring with you all the fragrance that you have gathered.
Sit down, slowly, gracefully as a buddha, for a few seconds.
This is going to be your lifestyle.

I don't want any followers.
I want everybody to be a buddha,
a master unto himself.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Can we celebrate the buddhas?
Yes!

## The Buddha: The Emptiness of the Heart

**Chapter #**2
Chapter title: Twenty-four hours a day
9 September 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
DAIKAKU SAID:
ZEN PRACTICE IS NOT CLARIFYING CONCEPTUAL DISTINCTIONS, BUT THROWING AWAY ONE'S PRECONCEIVED VIEWS AND NOTIONS AND THE SACRED TEXTS AND ALL THE REST, AND PIERCING THROUGH THE LAYERS OF COVERINGS OVER THE SPRING OF SELF BEHIND THEM.
ALL THE HOLY ONES HAVE TURNED WITHIN AND SOUGHT IN THE SELF, AND BY THIS, WENT BEYOND ALL DOUBT.
TO TURN WITHIN MEANS ALL THE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, AND IN EVERY SITUATION, TO PIERCE, ONE BY ONE, THROUGH THE LAYERS COVERING

THE SELF, DEEPER AND DEEPER, TO A PLACE WHICH CANNOT BE DESCRIBED. IT IS WHEN THINKING COMES TO AN END AND MAKING DISTINCTIONS CEASES, WHEN WRONG VIEWS AND IDEAS DISAPPEAR OF THEMSELVES WITHOUT HAVING TO BE DRIVEN FORTH; WHEN, WITHOUT BEING SOUGHT, THE TRUE ACTION AND TRUE IMPULSE APPEAR OF THEMSELVES. IT IS WHEN ONE CAN KNOW WHAT IS THE TRUTH OF THE HEART.
THE MAN RESOLUTE IN THE WAY MUST, FROM THE BEGINNING, NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF IT, WHETHER IN A PLACE OF CALM OR IN A PLACE OF STRIFE, AND HE MUST NOT BE CLINGING TO QUIET PLACES AND SHUNNING THOSE WHERE THERE IS DISTURBANCE.
IF HE TRIES TO TAKE REFUGE FROM TROUBLE BY RUNNING TO SOME QUIET PLACE, HE WILL FALL INTO DARK REGIONS.
IF, WHEN HE IS TRYING TO THROW OFF DELUSIONS AND DISCOVER TRUTH, EVERYTHING IS A WHIRL OF POSSIBILITIES, HE MUST CUT OFF THE THOUSAND IMPULSES AND GO STRAIGHT FORWARD, HAVING NO THOUGHT AT ALL ABOUT GOOD OR BAD. NOT HATING THE PASSIONS, HE MUST SIMPLY MAKE HIS HEART PURE.

Maneesha, Zen can say things which no other religion is capable of. Zen is a rare flower. All other religions are subservient to the vested interests, to the past, to the society, to the state. Zen is an exception. My love for it is

not without reason. It is the only revolutionary approach to the ultimate reality, and a man like Daikaku is a perfectly representative master. You have to listen to his every word as if you are listening to me.

DAIKAKU SAID:

ZEN PRACTICE IS NOT CLARIFYING CONCEPTUAL DISTINCTIONS...

The whole theological world and the whole philosophical world are concerned only with clarifying conceptual distinctions -- what is what. They never go beyond the conceptual mind. Looking from the point of view of Zen, what they are doing is not only childish, it is also stupid. A child can grow up, but stupidity only becomes thicker and thicker and thicker.

All the religions have served the politicians, the emperors, the murderers, the criminals. You may not be aware of it, but you have to be aware. The pope in the second world war blessed Mussolini, who was a fascist, to be victorious. He prayed to God to make Benito Mussolini the victor. Now it is strange, the archbishop of England was also praying to the same God -- both are Christians -- but Italy and England were at war. Even Adolf Hitler was blessed and received the prayers of both the Catholic and Protestant religions. Their high priests prayed to God that he should be made the victor.

Now, God must have been in trouble to decide! All sides were praying to the same God, the same Christian God. They all worshipped the same Christian Bible. But this strange situation shows completely that your religion is nothing but a servant to the state -- it can even pray for Adolf Hitler to become the victor over the world. It does

not matter for whom the religion is praying; it has always been favorable to those who have power and riches.
Zen is in every way exceptional. Japan was also at war but not a single Zen master blessed the emperor of Japan to be the conqueror.
The emperor of Japan had gone to receive blessings from a Zen master, and wondered how to ask him. First he had tried to persuade the master to come to his court. The master refused. He said, "Even if God calls me to his court, I will refuse. I am perfectly happy where I am. If you want to see me, then you have to come. The thirsty has to come to the well." A clear-cut answer....
The emperor finally had to concede, reluctantly, and he went with all his court following him. Not finding a word -- what to say? -- he asked, "I have always wondered: what is hell and what is heaven?"
The master said, "You idiot!" I don't think any emperor has ever received such a welcome. A poor monk who has no possessions, nothing except himself... but having himself gives him such authority that he can say to the emperor, "You are an idiot!" The emperor became furious. This was too much. He pulled out his sword and was going to cut off the head of the master.
The master said, "Wait a little... this is the door of hell."
The emperor thought for a moment. He had been given the answer: anger, violence, destructiveness. He pulled back his sword and the master said, "This is the door of heaven. Do you want to ask any more questions?"
The emperor said, "I am satisfied." He could not manage to ask, "Bless me, that I should be the victor in the great world

war." Just being in the master's presence, the very idea looked stupid.

Zen has never been in any way what Karl Marx calls the opium of the people. It is unfortunate that a genius like Karl Marx had no idea of Zen. He knew, in the name of religion, only Christianity which is the worst religion in the world. He did not know the flights of Gautam Buddha, of Mahakashyap, of Nansen, of Tozan. He was absolutely unaware of the East, and religion is an Eastern contribution to the world. In the Far East, in Japan, it has come to flower in its totality.

Daikaku is one of those masters who have come to their fullness, to their fulfillment. Just listen to what he says:

ZEN PRACTICE IS NOT CLARIFYING CONCEPTUAL DISTINCTIONS, BUT THROWING AWAY ONE'S PRECONCEIVED VIEWS AND NOTIONS AND THE SACRED TEXTS AND ALL THE REST, AND PIERCING THROUGH THE LAYERS OF COVERINGS OVER THE SPRING OF SELF BEHIND THEM.

Daikaku is famous for burning all the scriptures that belonged to the monastery of which he had become the head, the successor. He burned all the scriptures and he stopped one thousand disciples in the monastery from reading them, saying, "This is not a university, you are not here to study something. You are here to transform yourself, to seek yourself; and that is not possible through scriptures. Throw out all these scriptures, holy and unholy, both together."

It was very shocking when Daikaku did it. It shocked almost the whole Buddhist world. But Daikaku was a man of the same strength and the same power as Bodhidharma

or Mahakashyap. He did not care what the world said, he knew what he was doing. The only way to reach yourself is to throw away all your preconceived ideas, all your prejudices, all your scriptures, all your religious notions. Anything concerned with the self that has been conceived through the mind has to be thrown away, cleaned out completely.

No scriptures can give you the experience of your being. They are really the hindrances -- your life spring is covered by those layers of prejudices and conceptions. Unless you throw them away, whether it is the Bible or Shrimad Bhagavadgita or the holy Koran or Dhammapada... it does not matter what it is. Whatever is covering your life spring, throw it away without a single moment of hesitation. Because all that is borrowed is just dust, layers and layers of dust, and you are covered with that dust.

ALL THE HOLY ONES HAVE TURNED WITHIN AND SOUGHT IN THE SELF, AND BY THIS, WENT BEYOND ALL DOUBT.

He is saying, "It is not only me, but all the buddhas have done the same. They have all burned the whole contents of the mind and cleared the space so that the life springs can flow directly and you can know for the first time your own eternity, your own splendor."

It is a paradox to say it, but it is a fact that all your religious teaching is a barrier to your becoming religious. To know anything about God from others is dangerous. It will prevent you from knowing existence directly, and you will settle for cheap knowledge.

Zen's whole revolution is: don't settle for cheap knowledge; go for the costly experience. And anything that hinders the

way, throw it out. Gautam Buddha has even said, "If I come into your meditations, cut off my head immediately! Nobody is to be allowed to hinder your progress." These were real lions. Humanity can be proud of these people who did not desire to enslave you, as Catholics, as Hindus, as Mohammedans; whose whole effort was to liberate you from all "isms," from all churches, and to help you penetrate your own reality. That is the only truth, the only space which is holy.

TO TURN WITHIN MEANS ALL THE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, AND IN EVERY SITUATION, TO PIERCE, ONE BY ONE, THROUGH THE LAYERS COVERING THE SELF, DEEPER AND DEEPER, TO A PLACE WHICH CANNOT BE DESCRIBED. IT IS WHEN THINKING COMES TO AN END AND MAKING DISTINCTIONS CEASES, WHEN WRONG VIEWS AND IDEAS DISAPPEAR OF THEMSELVES WITHOUT HAVING TO BE DRIVEN FORTH; WHEN, WITHOUT BEING SOUGHT, THE TRUE ACTION AND TRUE IMPULSE APPEAR OF THEMSELVES. IT IS WHEN ONE CAN KNOW WHAT IS THE TRUTH OF THE HEART.

In these few statements he has covered the whole journey from falsehood to truth, from darkness to light, from death to immortality. What he has said can be condensed, so that you can remember it not as knowledge but only as a finger indicating the moon -- just a few hints for your own inner journey.

The first thing is, twenty-four hours a day, to remember what you find in your meditations. You will forget again and again, but the gaps of forgetfulness will become less

and the length of remembering will become longer. By and by the gaps of forgetting will disappear. There comes a time when you are a whole circle of remembrance, twenty-four hours. Even in your sleep you know you are a buddha. A small story will explain it to you....

Ananda, Buddha's very intimate disciple, was almost forty-two years continuously serving Buddha, day and night, summer and winter. One night when Buddha was going to lie down, Ananda said, "I don't generally ask any questions, because every question that I could ask, others ask. And I am always here, so I listen to the answer. I know that any question I have is going to be asked by somebody or other; in these years this has become my experience. But there is one question I don't think anybody is going to ask. It is very situational."

Buddha said, "You can ask."

"The question," he said, "is not very great. But it has been troubling me for years."

Buddha said, "You could have asked at any time."

Ananda said, "I never wanted to trouble you. The whole day you are working on people, and in the night you are alone with me. The question is that I have been watching you for twenty years continuously... even in the night I get up once or twice to have a look at you to see whether you are all right. What has been puzzling me is that you keep the same posture the whole night. You don't change sides, you don't even move your leg. Do you sleep or do you remain awake?"

Buddha said, "My body sleeps; it sleeps very profoundly. But as far as I am concerned, I am just a pure awareness. So having found the right position, the one which is the

most comfortable, I have not changed it for twenty years. And I am not going to change it till my last breath."
He died in the same posture. Because of Buddha, the posture has become known as the Lion's Posture. For forty-two years after his enlightenment, his day and night was a continuity of awareness.
That's what Daikaku is saying:
TO TURN WITHIN MEANS ALL THE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS...
Go on turning in. Whenever you find a moment to turn, turn. And it is such a simple act to turn within -- nobody's help is needed. No ladder is needed, no door has to be opened. Just close your eyes and look in. Sitting in a bus, traveling in a train... you can do it any time, and slowly slowly you don't even need to close your eyes. The remembrance simply remains, of its own accord.
That's what Daikaku is saying:
IT IS MOST BEAUTIFUL WHEN, WITHOUT BEING SOUGHT, THE TRUE ACTION AND TRUE IMPULSE APPEAR OF THEMSELVES. IT IS WHEN ONE CAN KNOW WHAT IS THE TRUTH OF THE HEART.
What is the truth of the heart? The ordinary commonsense view of the heart is that it is the source of emotions like love or hate or anger. Just as the mind is the source of conceptual thoughts, the heart is the source of all that is emotional and sentimental. That is the commonsense view. But when Buddha says `the heart' he means the very center of your being. It is his understanding that your love, your hate, everything, arises out of your mind. And I think he is being absolutely scientific; all psychologists will agree with him.

You can experiment yourself. You can see from where your anger arises -- it is the mind; from where your emotions arise -- it is the mind. Mind is a big phenomenon; it covers conceptual thinking, it covers your emotional patterns, your sentiments. To Buddha, the mind contains all that arises in you, and the heart is that which is always silent and empty and watching.

What is THE TRUTH OF THE HEART? -- Silence and watchfulness.

THE MAN RESOLUTE IN THE WAY MUST, FROM THE BEGINNING, NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF IT...

From the very beginning one should remember that we are in search of a place, a space, where nothing arises -- no dust, no smoke; where everything is pure and clean, utterly empty, just spaciousness. One should be clear from the very beginning what we are looking for.

... NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF IT, WHETHER IN A PLACE OF CALM OR IN A PLACE OF STRIFE, AND HE MUST NOT BE CLINGING TO QUIET PLACES AND SHUNNING THOSE WHERE THERE IS DISTURBANCE.

Zen is not against the world. That is one more of its rebellious attitudes against all religions. All religions somehow condemn the world. All religions praise those who have renounced the world, those who have gone away from it, renouncing the wife, the children, the home. Somebody has some day to do deep research into how many millions of people have left the world in the name of religion and caused to suffer small children, old parents, wives and husbands; who have disturbed the life of many in the name of religion. And do you think these people have

found anything? They have simply created many prostitutes, many orphanages, many poor old people, dying without food or medicine. And what have they gained? Not a single one of them has attained to buddhahood.

Zen is very clear and straightforward about everything. It is not a question of renouncing the world; the question is of renouncing your mind.

Wherever you go, your mind will go with you. Your knowledge will go with you, your prejudices will go with you, your scriptures will go with you. Your idea that you are a Hindu or a Mohammedan will go with you. So what are you renouncing?

Zen does not want you to renounce the world but to renounce the mind, so that you can find the empty heart. The empty heart is your purity, your virginity. This empty heart opens the door to the universal and the eternal.

Daikaku is saying that people ordinarily do one thing: wherever there is strife or some disturbance, they avoid that place. These are the people who have renounced the world because to be in the world is a difficult task, every moment there is some difficulty. They are escapists.

Once and for all it should be clear that the future of religion cannot depend on the escapists. The authentic religious man will live in the world without being disturbed by all kinds of disturbances. He will be simply a watcher, unperturbed. In fact the world is a good place because it gives you an opportunity to test your silence, your meditativeness, your watchfulness. Be in the world but don't be of it. Be in the world but don't let the world be in you.

It is the ordinary mind's approach that where things are quiet and peaceful, it is good; there you can meditate. So people have gone to the Himalayas to meditate. And what they meditate on, you will be surprised: they meditate more on the world that they have left behind! Because everything that they have left behind forcibly, follows them in their minds.

I have heard two stories. One is about an American billionaire. He became tired of money, tired of women, tired of drugs. Finally he thought, "I have to go to the Himalayas, to find a real master to show me the way to peace." He traveled to the Himalayas and inquired, "Is somebody aware of an authentic master?" People said, "Yes, there is a man near Mansarovar" -- the highest lake in the world, on top of the Himalayas. "He has been there perhaps for sixty years or more, nobody remembers; we have always known him to be there. He is the only man there."

Even the swans which live in Mansarovar leave it for three months and come down to the plains, because for those months the lake is completely frozen. You can walk on it, you can drive over it; it is like solid rock. The people said, "But even in those months that man never leaves the place. Obviously, he must have found the truth; otherwise why should one remain there for sixty years in such arduous conditions?"

The billionaire was not to be discouraged; on the contrary, it became a challenge. He was a man who had fought many challenges in his life. He was born a poor man and he became a billionaire by sheer effort and struggle. So he

struggled; it was a difficult task to reach there, because no buses go there, no roads go there. He had to find his path by just looking at the map and moving into the unknown. Finally, he found an old man, a very old man. He thought in his mind that if there is any God, he must look like this man! He was very happy, although tired and tattered. He fell at the feet of the old man and he said, "I am coming from America. I am a super-rich man, but I am tired of the world; I have renounced everything."

The old man looked at him and said, "These matters we will discuss later on. Do you have a cigarette on you? Sixty years, and not a single idiot has come here with a cigarette."

The billionaire was very much shocked, but he gave his whole packet, and a lighter, and the old man said, "You are a very religious person."

"But," the billionaire said, "what am I to do now?"

He said, "Go back. And when you come again, bring as many cigarettes as possible."

He said, "This is strange! I had come here for enlightenment..."

The old man said, "Do what I have told you. Just this way -- going back and coming again, going back and coming again -- you will become enlightened."

Miserably, he went away. No one has ever heard that he came back again. But this man, for sixty years, had been waiting for a cigarette.

The second story is certainly fiction. This one that I have just told you may be true. The second is that when Edmund Hillary reached Everest he was surprised to see a Hindu sannyasin squatting on the ground there. He said, "My god!

We used to think that nobody had ever reached here. How did you manage?"
He said, "I come here every day. This is a sort of toilet for me. I live just nearby. But these things we can discuss later on -- how much for your watch? Because here it is so difficult to know what time it is..."

These people who have escaped from the world, do you think they are thinking about anything else? They are thinking more of the world than you are, because you don't have to think -- it is there! These poor fellows have to think thousands of things which are not there. Mind always desires that which is not there. That which is with you, mind simply accepts; there is no need to think about it.
This ordinary conception has prevailed amongst humanity that one should go to a quiet place to meditate, and get away from places which are full of strife, struggle, conflict. But Zen has a totally different attitude -- and more psychological. There is no need to leave the world. The world is a perfectly good place -- as a fire test. What is needed is to go in, not to go somewhere out.
And you can go in anywhere in the world, whether it is the Himalayas or the M. G. Road. You can become enlightened even with a rented bicycle! It does not matter that it was rented. I have heard of people becoming enlightened even on stolen bicycles, because becoming enlightened has nothing to do with bicycles.
Daikaku says:
IF HE TRIES TO TAKE REFUGE FROM TROUBLE BY RUNNING TO SOME QUIET PLACE, HE WILL FALL INTO DARK REGIONS.

No other religion has said that. And I authenticate it: The person who escapes from troubles falls certainly into a very dark space, because his very beginning is wrong. He is going away from the trouble. He should have remained in the trouble, untroubled -- that would have been some gain. But he has escaped from it, and when there is no struggle, no trouble, no strife.... Sitting somewhere in the Himalayas, the silence that surrounds you is of the Himalayas, not of you. That is not going to help. You have to find your own Himalayas within.

IF, WHEN HE IS TRYING TO THROW OFF DELUSIONS AND DISCOVER TRUTH, EVERYTHING IS A WHIRL OF POSSIBILITIES, HE MUST CUT OFF THE THOUSAND IMPULSES AND GO STRAIGHT FORWARD, HAVING NO THOUGHT AT ALL ABOUT GOOD OR BAD.

You can see the rebelliousness of Zen. Every religion is concerned that you should be good, you should not be bad, you should be respectable, you should not be condemned by the society. You should not lose your good repute even if you have to be a hypocrite. Just be good, even though the good is not arising on its own but you are forcing it.

It is the greatness of Zen.... Don't have any thoughts about good or bad. Be absolutely a witness, and while you are just a witness, whatever happens through you is bound to be good. The whole world may condemn it; it does not matter. You have to listen only to your own heart. If your heart says "yes, go on," then go on straight forward. Even if it is against all morality, against all doctrines, against all religions, it does not matter. It should not be against your simple, innocent heart. The only criterion is that it should

be spontaneous. Spontaneity is good; non-spontaneity is hypocrisy.

NOT HATING THE PASSIONS, HE MUST SIMPLY MAKE HIS HEART PURE.

On every point Zen differs from all other religions, and on every point Zen is right. It does not say to you, "Fight with your passions, drop your passions. Unless you drop all your desires, passions, longings, you cannot attain to the truth." The reality is just vice versa. If you get into this struggle of dropping passions, you will never win. Don't be bothered by the passions, by the desires. Find the empty heart and its purity and you will find that all passions, all desires are transformed.

People always begin from the wrong end. And there is a reason why they begin with the wrong end. The wrong end seems to be rational. For example, they see in Gautam Buddha great compassion. This compassion is arising spontaneously, but they don't know the empty heart of the buddha, from where this compassion is arising. They can see his compassionate actions, and they logically derive the conclusion that if you do compassionate acts you will become a buddha.

The law, the dhamma, does not work this way. In the first place you cannot drop the passions. You can fight, you can wrestle, and you can suffer and you can torture yourself. You can repress, you can become a pervert -- as all the monks of all the religions have become perverts, psychologically sick, because they have been fighting against nature.

Nobody can win against nature. But they are doing something "rational." It seems to them that by being

compassionate... And their compassion will be bogus, false. You know when your smile is just on the lips, a lipstick smile, it has no roots anywhere inside. It is just there on the lips.

I have heard about a politician in America. In America, politicians in an election go from house to house, kissing small babies. In a small park there were at least two dozen babies with one woman. The politician thought, "My god!" And all those babies were dirty, smelly, their noses running, and he had to kiss all of them just to convince the woman that he was the right candidate. Then he told the woman, "Remember, this is my name and I am running for president."
She said, "I will remember. You are so kind."
Then he asked the woman, "Just one question arises -- are all these children yours?"
She said, "No, not a single one."
The politician said, "Not a single one? What are you doing here?"
She said, "I am just keeping an eye on them. Their mothers have gone to a conference."
He said, "Fuck you, you noodle! Why didn't you tell me before? I had to kiss all these brats -- they all seem to be Italians, full of spaghetti -- and you didn't stop me!" All that kissing was just political, diplomatic.
Unless your life arises from your spontaneity, from your very empty heart, it is going to be just superficial. And with the superficial you cannot be blissful; with the superficial you are going to remain miserable. Only with the truth is there the beginning of a different kind of life -- of joy, of

bliss, of dance. Then your whole being is full of songs. Then all your actions are poetic. Then your very presence has a grace, a beauty which is not of the body. It is radiating from the body but it is coming from the deep sources of your own empty heart.

Upon his enlightenment a Zen monk wrote:
YOU, BEFORE ME STANDING,
OH, MY ETERNAL SELF!
SINCE MY FIRST GLIMPSE
YOU HAVE BEEN MY SECRET LOVE.

At the moment of death you cannot think about what movie is running in a certain theater. When death is standing before you, you cannot think of anything else. The Zen monk is saying in this small haiku:
YOU, BEFORE ME STANDING, OH, MY ETERNAL SELF!
In the mirror of death he has seen his original face. All things are dropped, all concerns are dropped, all preoccupations are dropped.
SINCE MY FIRST GLIMPSE YOU HAVE BEEN MY SECRET LOVE.
You are all in search of a secret love. And you are all trying to find it in somebody else. Hence the frustration of all lovers except those who are never allowed to meet. Only those who are never allowed to meet are remembered, for centuries, for their great love.
In the East we know Shiri and Farhad, Laila and Majnu. Because they were never allowed to meet by their parents and society they have become symbolic of great lovers. But

it is strange: they were never allowed even to meet with each other, and they have become the symbols of great love. And what has happened to the millions of lovers who have been allowed? Not a single one of them has proved to be a great lover. All are simply lousy.

Every love affair is a failure, without exception. You may accept it, you may not. One tries to hide the fact as long as possible, but everybody knows what everybody is doing. Your frustration is bound to happen. Your real love is for the eternal self, hidden behind the curtain, and you never look behind the curtain. You are just playing on the stage and befooling.

Everybody's great love is to know the secret of the eternal and immortal life. You cannot find it in another person. When you meet on the sea beach it seems -- and to everyone it is the same story -- "this woman -- or this man -- is made for me." Nobody is made for anybody; everybody is made for himself.

You are not some kind of manufactured parts, such that you are made to fit with each other. So when you don't fit, then the tragedy begins. Before that all is goody-goody. The real test is after the honeymoon. After the honeymoon the lovers are finished, they don't look at each other eye to eye. The husband goes on reading the same newspaper to avoid the wife....

A man was saying to his friend in the pub, "Why do you always remain silent? You don't say anything."

He said, "The whole credit goes to my wife. She talks and I listen. She does not like any interruption. So after years of listening without interrupting, it has become a habit.

Wherever I am, even though my wife is not there, I sit silently."
The failure of love in the world shows a significant fact: perhaps our love is searching for something else, and because we don't find it in our so-called lovers, the frustration arises. Nobody is responsible, it is just that our direction is wrong. The real lover is within you. The eternal lover is within you. Once you have found it, you are absolutely content with yourself. There is no need for anyone because you are no longer incomplete.
Only a buddha is fulfilled.

Question 1
Maneesha has asked:
OUR BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS THE WISDOM OF THE HEART?

Maneesha, common sense carries many fragments of truth, but they are never complete. Around the world everywhere it is heard -- "the wisdom of the heart." But the truth is, wisdom arises not out of the heart, it arises out of the emptiness of the heart. But that is known only to those who have reached deepest into the self.
But common sense carries fragments of knowledge. It knows that the people who are compassionate, people of heart, have a certain wisdom which is not knowledge, a certain insight, a certain intuitiveness which cannot be taught. They can see things, feel things. They are sensitive to things which are not available to the mind. So people start thinking that there are possibilities of the heart having wisdom.

But they don't know that the heart is your emptiness. And out of your emptiness a clarity, a transparency arises which can see things which you cannot intellectually infer. This is wisdom.

To make it complete, Maneesha, it has to be said, "the wisdom of the empty heart." The heart, as the physiologist knows it, is just a blood-pumping system. Out of your heartbeats no wisdom can arise. Have you ever felt any wisdom arising from your heartbeats? Has any doctor ever heard some wisdom while checking your heartbeats through his stethoscope?

This heart is not the one we mean when we are talking about the emptiness of the heart. Actually, we are talking about throwing away all the contents of the mind. Then, the no-mind itself becomes your heart. It is not a physiological thing. It is your no-mind -- no prejudice, no knowledge, no content. Just purity, simple silence, and the no-mind can be called the empty heart. It is only a question of expression. What you want to choose, you can choose: the wisdom of the empty heart, or the wisdom of no-mind -- they are equivalent.

When you are in deep meditation, you feel a great serenity, a joy that is unknown to you, a watchfulness that is a new guest. Soon this watchfulness will become the host. The day the watchfulness becomes the host, it remains twenty-four hours with you. And out of this watchfulness, whatever you do has a wisdom in it. Whatever you do shows a clarity, a purity, a spontaneity, a grace.

A Mulla Nasruddin story....

He was born in Iran, and in Iran his grave is still there. A strange grave, unique in the whole world. There are millions of graves, but nothing like Mulla Nasruddin's grave. On the grave there is standing a closed door with a big lock on it. And the lock... Mulla Nasruddin before dying made all the arrangements. "You put the key with me inside the grave, so nobody can open the door." Even the emperor came to see -- "What nonsense is happening! And this man is thought to be a wise man, of course a little eccentric, but loved by everybody."

The emperor inquired of Nasruddin's disciples, "What is the matter?"

They said, "It is not new. He used to carry this door wherever he went. We asked him, `What is the matter?' He said, `If I take the door with me, nobody can enter into my house. Obviously, everybody enters into the house from the door. So just to protect the house, I carry the door with me.' And before dying he said, `Fix that door on my grave, lock it, and put the key with me. Any time I like I can open the door and just have some fresh air.'"

The emperor said, "All nonsense."

But the emperor also liked the man. The chief disciple said, "There is something in it. He is saying: Don't think that my death is my death. You are putting my body in the grave but I am still alive. My life is eternal."

But he was crazy always. To make this statement, that life is eternal, he has put up this door: "Any moment, if I want to come out, at least I have the key and I don't have to ask anybody's permission. I can open the door, have a little walk, or enjoy around the city. You will not see me, but I will see you."

Mulla Nasruddin was once sent by the emperor of Iran with great gifts to the emperor of India. And Nasruddin praised the emperor of India as the full moon. The rumor reached Iran -- there were enemies of Nasruddin, and they said, "You have not chosen the right person to take the message. He has praised the emperor of India as the full moon!"
The emperor said, "Let him come back. He will have to answer; otherwise he will lose his head."
Nasruddin came back. The Indian emperor was very impressed by him, and had given him many presents. The emperor of Iran was very angry and he said, "Nasruddin, your life is at risk!"
Nasruddin said, "Everybody's life is always at risk. Do you think your life is not at risk?"
The emperor said, "Don't discuss philosophy, you have to answer. You called the Indian emperor the `full moon.' It is insulting to me."
Nasruddin said, "You are an idiot; you don't understand the meaning. You are the rising moon, the first-day moon, which is just a small arc, remains for a few moments and disappears. The full moon means the days of decline have come. That Indian emperor was an idiot. He thought I was praising him, but I was simply declaring that `Your time has come. Now there is no more growth, only decline.' And you are an idiot for being angry. You are the rising moon -- you have to expand, conquer. You have enough time to become a full moon."
The emperor was very much impressed by the interpretation. Nasruddin's enemies were simply shocked. They had never thought that he would give this

interpretation. Nobody ever thought about it; everybody thought that he had been insulting.

Nasruddin is a Sufi mystic, a little crazy, but always tremendously wise. One day he was going to take his disciples to see a rare collection of paintings that had come to the city. Now the question was... He would be riding on his donkey. He asked his disciples, "What to do? If I ride on my donkey in the usual way, then my back will be towards you. That is insulting, and I cannot insult my disciples. If you walk ahead of me, your backs will be towards me. I don't think you will do that insult to me. So the only possible way is, I will ride on the donkey facing you."

The disciples said, "But the whole town will laugh, and you will make us also look stupid... although there is a point in it. But to go anywhere with you is a trouble."

The procession went on through the town. Everybody looked -- what is the matter? Nobody had ever seen anybody riding on a donkey facing backwards. Finally a crowd gathered, and they said, "We will not let you go unless we get the explanation."

Nasruddin said, "The explanation is simple. I don't want to insult my disciples so I cannot have my back towards them. And I don't want to be insulted by my disciples, so they cannot walk ahead of me. They have to walk behind me. Now what do you say -- how can it be managed? This is the only way."

People said, "It is crazy, but it is the only way. If keeping somebody at your back is insulting, then certainly you are doing the right thing."

A simple man with utter purity -- every act in his life is full of wisdom, but on the surface looks a little crazy. He belongs to the same category as Bodhidharma, as Mahakashyap. But he is a little more eccentric than any of them.

From the emptiness of the heart, it is not necessary that what arises will be understood by people as wisdom. You will be perfectly at ease with it, and those who understand you will be perfectly at ease with you. But in this world to find people who can understand the wisdom of the empty heart is very difficult and rare.

But there is no problem. The man of empty heart does not need any recognition. He is so fulfilled that he may look mad to the whole world, but if it is arising out of his spontaneity, it does not matter. All that matters is that it should not be fake, that it should not be hypocrisy, that it should not be phony. It should be coming out of your heart and its emptiness. Then everything is wise whether people recognize it or not.

Who has recognized Mulla Nasruddin? Very few people. Who has recognized Bodhidharma? Very few people. Who has recognized Mahakashyap suddenly laughing? Only Gautam Buddha. Ten thousand monks were present but nobody could understand this eccentric behavior. But it was arising out of the empty heart, from a clarity of vision. Only another man of the same clarity can understand it.

Maneesha, the wisdom of the empty heart is understandable only to those who have entered into their own emptiness. To others it will remain a puzzle, a craziness, a madness. And there are so many beautiful buddhas -- their behavior was absolutely in tune with the emptiness of the heart, but

it was not rational. It could not be understood by the so-called intellectual. It was almost impossible to be understood by the crowd.

In Japan there is a doll... it is available anywhere, here too. The doll is called daruma. Daruma is a Japanese nickname for Bodhidharma, and the doll represents something special. It was made, so goes the story, by Bodhidharma. The doll is made in such a way that its bottom is very heavy, so you can throw it any way and it will always fall and sit up immediately in the lotus posture. When Bodhidharma made it, his disciples laughed: "What are you doing?"
He said, "This will be a teaching even for small children to be a buddha in every position, in every situation. Look at this doll; throw it any way and it will immediately regain its balance and sit in the buddha posture."
A buddha of the category of Bodhidharma can make a doll far more important than any scripture. The tea you drink... perhaps you don't know the whole story of it. Bodhidharma was meditating on a mountain in China called T'a. And he did not want to blink his eyes, but it is natural for the eyes to blink. He wanted to keep his eyes open while he was meditating, so he cut off his eyelids and threw them just in front his temple. From the hairs of the eyelids, the first tea leaves grew.
That is the story. It is called tea, because it was first found on the mountain of T'a and all the names in the different languages refer to the mountain, T'a. In Marathi it is cha, in Hindi it is chai. But it originates with the mountain, T'a. Of

course it is a fiction. But because it grew out of the hairs of Bodhidharma, it keeps you awake.
So when you want to be awake... just a cup of tea. But remember, it keeps you awake because it is a product of Bodhidharma's eyelids. And Bodhidharma was a man of absolute awareness, so some quality of awareness still continues in tea.
It is a beautiful story, and its implications are great. Anything that comes out of the empty heart and its wisdom is going to carry some quality for the coming centuries. It may look like a fiction -- it is a fiction. But even a fiction can be used to indicate a truth. Tea keeps you awake because Bodhidharma was a man of fully awakened consciousness.
Even if you watch Buddha's statue silently, you will be surprised that slowly your mind becomes empty and you start entering into your own spring of life. That statue is made exactly in the posture that Gautam Buddha used to meditate in. Sitting in front of that statue, something in you starts synchronizing with the posture of the statue. Doing nothing, just sitting, and the buddha starts reflecting in your mirror.
But the mirror has to be clean, the mirror has to be empty of content. That's what we are trying to do every day -- washing the mirror, cleaning the dust of the centuries. Every day something of the impurity drops away; something becomes more recognizable as a buddha. Maybe just a glimpse, but soon this glimpse will become your whole life.

Before you all become buddhas, a few laughters, because after becoming a buddha, laughter does not suit. No buddha laughs. So it is always good to laugh before you become a buddha, because if you laugh when you are a buddha it will be objected to.

Good old Olga Kowalski comes stomping down the stairs to find her husband on the couch watching football on television.
"Kowalski," she nags, "how come we never talk anymore? Other husbands talk to their wives. You have not said two words to me all week!"
Then Olga furiously steps in front of the TV and demands, "Just say two words!"
"Okay," says Kowalski, stretching his neck around to see the TV. "Shut Up!"

Miss Goodbody is teaching sex education to her ninth-grade class. Sitting in the back of the room, reading Playboy and smoking a cigarette, is Chester Cheese's kid, Wise-guy Willy.
"Class," begins Miss Goodbody, shakily, "today we will discuss sexual intercourse."
Wise-guy Willy puts down his magazine, smiles, and winks at Miss Goodbody.
"Uh... there are eight basic positions for sexual intercourse," Miss Goodbody says nervously.
"Nine," comes Willy's voice from the back.
Flustered and blushing, Miss Goodbody begins again.
"There are eight basic positions for sexual intercourse," she stammers.

"Nine," interrupts Willy, again.
This time Miss Goodbody takes a deep breath and continues, "The first is called the missionary position: the man is on top of the woman and facing her..."
"Aha!" says Willy, winking again, "ten!"

Paddy and Kowalski are in town for a drinking spree. After a lot of drinking, they decide to go to the hundred-story-high, revolving, Roasting Rhinoceros Restaurant for some dinner.
They choose a table overlooking the city lights, but have only been sitting there for a few minutes when both of them feel the need to pee.
"Can you tell us where the bathroom is?" Paddy slobbers at the head waiter.
"Certainly, sir," replies the waiter, pointing across the restaurant. "Just go down the passage over there, turn left and go two steps down."
The directions are repeated again for Kowalski, who is not quite sure he knows where he is, or what he is looking for.
"Just remember," says the head waiter, "turn left and two steps down..."
So, Paddy and Kowalski set off across the room and down the passage. They take the first door on the left and step inside, into the open elevator shaft.
One hundred stories below, Paddy slowly picks himself up off the ground.
"How do you feel?" Paddy asks his Polack friend, lying beside him.
"Not too bad," replies Kowalski. "But I don't think I can manage that second step."

Nivedano...

Nivedano...

Be silent, close your eyes. Feel your body to be completely frozen.
Look inwards, as deep as possible.
It is your own space.
At the very end you will find the empty heart.
The empty heart is a door to eternity. It is a connection between you and existence. It is not something physical or material. It is not something mental or psychological. It is something beyond both, transcending both.
It is your spirituality.
Remember, the empty heart makes you a buddha.

This moment is blessed.
Ten thousand hearts are feeling the silence
and the merger with existence.
You are the fortunate ones of the earth.

Make it clear, Nivedano...

Relax... just be a watcher of mind and body both.
The insistence should be on the witnessing.
Witnessing is your secret love.
Witnessing is Buddha, watching.

Catch hold of the experience so that when you come back, you bring something out of your depth -- some gold, some diamond, some splendor.

Nivedano...

Come back, but come back with a new richness, with a new integrity, with a new individuality.
Reborn, sit for a few moments recollecting the experience that you are the buddha.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Can we celebrate the gathering of ten thousand buddhas?
Yes!

## The Buddha: The Emptiness of the Heart

**Chapter #**3
Chapter title: This knowing is a transformation
10 September 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
A LAYMAN ASKED BANKEI, "THOUGH I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR TEACHING OF BIRTHLESSNESS, THOUGHTS FROM CONSTANTLY APPLIED MENTAL HABITS READILY COME UP, AND I GET LOST IN THEM AND HAVE DIFFICULTY

REMAINING CONTINUALLY UNBORN. HOW CAN I APPLY WHOLEHEARTED FAITH?"
BANKEI REPLIED, "IF YOU TRY TO STOP ARISING THOUGHTS, THE STOPPING MIND AND THE STOPPED MIND BECOME SPLIT IN TWO AND YOU NEVER HAVE ANY PEACE OF MIND. JUST TRUST THAT THOUGHTS ARE ORIGINALLY NONEXISTENT BUT TEMPORARILY ARISE AND CEASE, CONDITIONED BY WHAT IS SEEN AND HEARD, AND HAVE NO REAL SUBSTANCE."
ANOTHER LAYMAN ASKED, "WHEN I WIPE OUT ARISING THOUGHTS, THEY KEEP COMING UP FROM THE TRACES, NEVER STOPPING. HOW CAN I CONTROL THESE THOUGHTS?"
BANKEI REPLIED, "WIPING OUT ARISING THOUGHTS IS LIKE WASHING BLOOD WITH BLOOD; THOUGH THE FIRST BLOOD MAY BE REMOVED, THE WASHING BLOOD STILL STAINS; NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU WASH, THE STAIN IS NOT REMOVED.
"THIS NO-MIND IS ORIGINALLY UNBORN AND UNDYING AND WITHOUT ILLUSION. NOT REALIZING THIS, THINKING THAT THOUGHTS ARE EXISTENT THINGS, YOU ROAM AROUND IN THE ROUTINES OF BIRTH AND DEATH.
"REALIZING THAT THOUGHTS ARE ONLY TEMPORARY APPEARANCES, YOU SHOULD LET THEM BE AS THEY START AND STOP, WITHOUT GRASPING OR REJECTING THEM. IT IS LIKE IMAGES REFLECTED IN A MIRROR; SINCE THE MIRROR IS CLEAR AND BRIGHT, IT REFLECTS

WHATEVER COMES BEFORE IT, BUT DOESN'T KEEP THE IMAGES.
"THE ENLIGHTENED NO-MIND IS INFINITELY BRIGHTER AND CLEARER THAN A MIRROR AND IS ALSO RADIANTLY AWARE, SO ALL THOUGHTS DISSOLVE IN THAT LIGHT WITHOUT LEAVING A TRACE. IF YOU CAN BELIEVE AND TRUST IN THIS TRUTH, NO MATTER HOW MUCH THEY COME UP, IT WON'T BE A HINDRANCE."

Maneesha, Gautama the Buddha marks a milestone in the history of consciousness. The society and the religion and the civilization that existed before him could not be the same after him.
It is just a Christian obsession to make Jesus Christ the line that divides the past from the present-day society. And it is also due to the fact that the East has never written history. It has never been interested in historical facts for the simple reason that if everything is illusory, changing, what does it matter who comes to rule? What does it matter what happens in the outside world? It is not the real thing.
As far as the eternal and the real is concerned, it is timeless, there is no question of history at all. History can be only of outside events, it cannot be of the inner. And because the whole concentration of the East was on the inner, it never bothered about history. Its concentration was directed more towards how to express the inner to those who are blind, to whose who are living in darkness. How to bring light to them?
We don't know how many buddhas have remained silent. We don't know how many buddhas preceded Gautam

Buddha. We have simply not been concerned about that kind of thing -- birth, death... all those things are ephemeral. But the Western attitude is outward. And because Christianity became the world's greatest religion, it has made Jesus Christ the dividing line between the primitive, barbarian society and the society which exists now. That's why we always refer to Jesus -- "Before Christ," or "After Christ."

Bertrand Russell was writing the history of the world. He was confronted with the idea that it is absolutely unjustified to divide the development of society with the name of Jesus. The real division happened twenty-five centuries ago with Gautam Buddha. An authentic history should refer to Gautam Buddha. Any incident has to be described as either "Before Gautam Buddha," or "After Gautam Buddha." There is no comparison between Jesus and Gautam Buddha. He was not even claiming that he was enlightened; he had not even heard what meditation is. He was only claiming that he was the last prophet of the Jews. His contribution to history is nothing. But Gautam Buddha's contribution to human consciousness is immense, immeasurable.

Bertrand Russell was a very impartial man. But still, childhood prejudices dominate you even in your eighties, nineties. He had long before denied his Christianity. He had written a book, WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN, and before the Christian religion expelled him, he had expelled the religion himself. So he was not an orthodox Christian, or even a Christian, but when the question came before him, of what to do with Jesus Christ and Gautam Buddha, he writes in his diaries: "For days I could not sleep. I knew

that it was Gautam Buddha, but my deep conditioning, of which I had never been aware, insisted that it had to be Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is ours; Gautam Buddha is a foreigner." Finally he conceded to his conditioning.
Nobody before or after Bertrand Russell has confronted the problem. It still continues. Even the non-Christians have accepted the idea that history is divided by Jesus Christ.
I want to make it clear to you that Gautam Buddha is the dividing line from the past -- his past, not our past. Now the time has come again; twenty-five centuries are enough. And that is what his calculation was, that after twenty-five centuries a new humanity should start, a new man, a new culture, a new vision, a new consciousness. According to him we are living in a very fortunate time -- a time of tremendous crisis, but of great challenges and uncountable possibilities.
I am talking about Zen simply to make the point that all religions are now out of date. Zen has no clingings with the past. It is not a by-product of the past, but rather an opening towards the future. I am not unnecessarily wasting my time and your time. It is not just by chance that I have chosen to speak on Zen.
We have come to a point of departure from the society in which we have lived, a moment of tremendous departure for consciousness. The way man has felt up to now has not been healthy. The way societies have structured themselves has been very sick. The whole civilization is almost non-existential.
When H.G. Wells was asked, he said that civilization is a good idea, but somebody has to do it -- it has not happened yet. We are still living in the shadows of barbarianism.

Gautam Buddha has not been heard, he has not been received around the world. It seems almost as if he is a mythological figure. He is one of the most integrated persons, the most awakened human beings that we have produced.

The future can be a discontinuity with our past only if the buddha is not a difficult and arduous achievement -- and he is not. We can create a society where everyone is a buddha. I don't say Buddhist, that is an ugly word. The future has not to be dominated by any "ism." But just the purity and grandeur of the man Buddha is so alluring; he has touched the highest peak possible to man. And he has made it possible now for every man to touch that highest peak. Whenever one man reaches to a certain point in consciousness, that point becomes easily available to anybody who wants to seek it. Gautam Buddha is a pioneer. You don't have to go through all the difficulties which he moved through. He had to, because there was no precedent. But for you there are a thousand and one precedents.

Zen has produced the finest masters, and they are all proclaiming a discontinuity with the past and bringing a new man -- the buddha, the awakened man, a man who lives consciously. We are doing this great experiment. These are not ordinary discourses or talks. I am not interested in any philosophy or any political ideology. I am interested directly in transforming you who have gathered around me.

This transformation is a simple phenomenon, once understood. What has been asked by a layman to the master Bankei is significant for you all.

Bankei is in a way a very simple man, not speaking in philosophical jargon but in day-to-day language, making very clear points. Even a little intelligence is enough to understand him. He is a man who has been on the hilltops of consciousness and has returned to the world to convey the message.

A LAYMAN ASKED BANKEI,

"THOUGH I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR TEACHING OF BIRTHLESSNESS, THOUGHTS FROM CONSTANTLY APPLIED MENTAL HABITS READILY COME UP, AND I GET LOST IN THEM AND HAVE DIFFICULTY REMAINING CONTINUALLY UNBORN. HOW CAN I APPLY WHOLEHEARTED FAITH?"

Faith is a wrong translation. Unfortunately all these translations have been done by Christian missionaries. There must have been a word which was something like trust, not faith. But to the Christian both seem to be synonymous.

Just a few days ago a man from Japan who is translating one of my books on the Dhammapada -- Gautam Buddha's greatest scripture, "the path of religiousness" -- wrote to me, "I was surprised: you don't know Japanese, you don't know Pali, you don't know Sanskrit. And in your talks on the Dhammapada, in many places you have changed words which have been put there by the Christian missionaries." He was simply amazed because he looked in the Japanese translations and he found that I was right every time. He could not believe how a man who does not understand Japanese can say that instead of `faith', there should be the word `trust'.

I can understand his difficulty, but it is not a difficult matter for me. I am not a commentator. When I speak on anyone, I have no commitment except to my own understanding, to my own illumination. And when I say that something is changed in a wrong way, translated wrongly, it does not mean I understand the Japanese or Chinese from which the translation has been done. It simply means that I know the very heart of Gautam Buddha. I know the emptiness of that heart, it is my own experience. No master who has touched the emptiness of the heart can talk in terms of faith. Faith is only for the blind.

I have told you the story. There was a blind man who was a great logician, in Buddha's time. There is no difficulty; eyes are not needed to be a logician. And because he was a great logician, nobody could prove to him that light exists. He argued, and argued so clearly, "You are either just befooling yourself, or you want me to be humiliated as a blind man. But I say there is no light."
And his reasoning was very clear, crystal clear. He said, "I am ready for every experiment. I want to touch it -- bring me to where there is light. I want to taste it. I am ready to smell it, I am ready to hear the sound of it."
Naturally the people were at a loss. What to do with this man? He is blind but he is a great debater. As far as arguments are concerned he is always a winner, because nobody can manage to make the sound of light; nothing like that exists... the taste of light, or the touch of light.
Once Gautam Buddha was just on the way towards the capital city of Vaishali, and he passed the village where the blind man lived. People thought, "This is a good

opportunity. Perhaps this is the last opportunity -- if this man can even defeat Buddha through his argumentation, then we are finished! Perhaps light does not exist. Perhaps we are dreaming about light."

That's what he used to say to people, "You are dreaming. Just cool down, be alert: there is no light, all is darkness."

They brought the man to Buddha. They thought that Buddha would argue with him, but instead of arguing, Buddha said, "You have brought him to a wrong person. He does not need more argumentation, because no argumentation can prove light. He needs a physician, a surgeon."

Buddha had his own personal physician, the best physician of those days, given to him by the king of Vaishali. The physician followed him continuously for forty-two years, till his last breath, just like a shadow taking care of him. He was fragile.

He said to his physician, "Take this case in your hands. I will be leaving tomorrow morning, but you remain behind until you are finished with this case."

The physician looked into the man's eyes and he said, "It will not be much time. I will soon catch up with you. His eyes are only covered with a thin layer which can be removed. Within a few weeks, he will be able to see light."

And after six weeks the physician came with the man to another village where Buddha had gone. The man came dancing. He fell unto the feet of Gautam Buddha and he said, "Just forgive me. I could not believe something which was not my experience; I am not a man of faith. But now that I can see light, a tremendous trust has arisen in me. In

your compassion you did not argue about it but you simply diagnosed the case and handed me over to the physician."
Faith is for the blind; trust is for one who has tasted something of the ultimate. The faithful are the followers. I don't want anybody here to believe or to have faith. I want you to trust in yourself; that if Gautam Buddha can become an Everest of consciousness, he has proved the point that every human consciousness has the same potential. Trust in it, trust in yourself.
This distinction has to be remembered. Belief is always in somebody else's ideology, and faith is in somebody else's personality.
Trust is in your own potentiality.
And because a man brings you to your potentiality, you have a tremendous gratitude towards him, not faith. But unfortunately only Christian missionaries have been doing the work of translating; nobody else is interested in translating. And unconsciously, they bring their own conditioning -- which is of faith -- into their translations. One can immediately say who is the translator of any passage. Is he a Christian, or a Mohammedan, or a Hindu, or a Jaina? Or is he a man of his own understanding, not belonging to any organized religion? Only a man who knows the truth can give a translation the flavor of truth.
Christians know only faith -- "Have faith in Jesus Christ." But why should one have faith in Jesus Christ? Do you want to be crucified? -- because that must be the ultimate attainment! And I don't think you will resurrect; neither did Jesus resurrect, he just escaped from the cave.
He was fortunate enough that his country, Judea, was under the Roman empire. So the Roman governor Pontius Pilate

was not interested at all in crucifying an innocent neurotic. A man who claims, "I am the only son of God" can only be thought of as neurotic. But it is not harmful, let him think it -- he is not doing any harm to anybody. Pontius Pilate was of the opinion that Jesus was innocent; he had not committed any crime, and if he enjoys the idea that he is the only begotten son of God, let him enjoy!

If you are jealous, you can have some other idea, "I am the only father of God." I don't think anybody can refute you, nobody has any evidence. It is just the same as being the son of God. You can be the father of God, or the brother of God. It is, first of all, your imagination, hallucination -- it is innocent.

If you meet somebody who says to you, "Do you know, I am the father of God" do you think he needs to be crucified? A very nice fellow, he just simply utters in your ear a truth in which he believes. You know that he has gone off the tracks, but that does not mean that he needs a crucifixion. He has to be enjoyed, entertained -- give him a party where he can declare "I am the father of God." Applaud him, and dance with him, because it is so rare to find a God and you have found the father of God! Maybe he can give you some clue where God is hiding.

The Jews were too serious. Unnecessarily they harassed Jesus; he had not done any harm to anybody. But every organized religion has an ego, a great ego. Jesus was making Judaism a laughingstock. Riding on his donkey, moving from town to town, declaring "I am the only begotten son of God" -- it was not a crime, but it was hurtful to the ego of the Jews. "This man sitting on the donkey... a poor carpenter's son, and it is well known that

he is not born of his own father. To accept him as our last prophet...?"

It was difficult to the ego of the Jews; otherwise it was an innocent affair. There was no need to be angry with the poor fellow. He needed psychiatric treatment, just good nourishment, care, and perhaps he might have come out of his neurosis.

If I meet him anywhere, just a single "Yaa-Hoo" and he will come down from the donkey: "You can take my donkey, I don't want to argue!" He simply needed a little hypnotic treatment, a reconditioning, a reprogramming, and he would have been perfectly healthy and would have laughed at the idea himself. But half of humanity believes and has faith in Jesus. This shows the retardedness of mankind.

Certainly this phrase "wholehearted faith" is a Christian interpretation. It is not the insight of those who are working on the path which Gautam Buddha traveled. It is not a path of belief or faith. In fact you have to throw away all your beliefs and all your faiths. You have to be clean, unburdened, because you are going to touch the heights. All these burdens will hamper your progress. You are going to know truth itself, so don't carry any ideas of truth because those ideas of truth will stand between you and the truth. Be completely clean -- that is the meaning of the empty heart of the buddha.

But the question the layman is asking to Bankei is important for you all. Except for that one word, the whole question is important to every meditator. I will repeat it.

A LAYMAN ASKED BANKEI,

"THOUGH I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR TEACHING OF BIRTHLESSNESS, THOUGHTS FROM CONSTANTLY APPLIED MENTAL HABITS READILY COME UP, AND I GET LOST IN THEM AND HAVE DIFFICULTY REMAINING CONTINUALLY UNBORN. HOW CAN I APPLY WHOLEHEARTED TRUST?"

This is the difficulty of every meditator. In different names the problem is the same. The problem is that in your meditations, for a split second maybe you have the glimpse, a taste of the eternal ecstasy. But you cannot keep remembering it twenty-four hours. Old habits, the old mind goes on interfering in many ways. It is a strange phenomenon because it is experienced only by meditators. Non-meditators never experience it because they don't have the context.

A meditator experiences, but when he comes back from those deep layers, back to his ordinary world, to the circumference, the mind starts creating doubt: "You have been dreaming. What nonsense is this eternity? Are you mad, that just by closing your eyes you attain to the ultimate truth?" The mind starts creating doubts.

And mind is your old friend -- four million years it has taken to develop. Your meditation is very new, very fresh, just a sprouting seed; your mind is a Lebanon cedar, two hundred, three hundred feet tall, almost reaching to the stars.

When you come to the circumference with your experience, suddenly there is a conflict between the new experience and the old, four-million-year-old mind. This mind will be almost like a mountain, and your experience is just a

roseflower. So again and again you will get caught by the mind.

That's what the layman is saying to Bankei: "I understand your teaching, I am grateful for it. But it is very difficult to remember that I have never been born, I have never died, that I am immortality itself. As I come back to the ordinary life, it is too heavy on the new experience which is just a bud opening. It crushes it completely."

Most meditators drop the idea after a few days, seeing the situation, that it is of no use. It is just a glimpse and then again you are back to your miserable world. And the miserable world is so powerful that you even start suspecting that you were dreaming. Your own experience becomes a faraway echo, as if you have heard somebody else telling you, and not that you have experienced it. It goes against your whole conditioning.

So this question of the layman is the question of all meditators.

BANKEI REPLIED, "IF YOU TRY TO STOP ARISING THOUGHTS, THE STOPPING MIND AND THE STOPPED MIND BECOME SPLIT IN TWO AND YOU NEVER HAVE ANY PEACE OF MIND. JUST TRUST THAT THOUGHTS ARE ORIGINALLY NONEXISTENT BUT TEMPORARILY ARISE AND CEASE, CONDITIONED BY WHAT IS SEEN AND HEARD, AND HAVE NO REAL SUBSTANCE."

He is saying that every meditator comes to this point: he has known a small space of thoughtlessness, so the natural conclusion seems to be that if he can stop the thought process, then he will have that open sky again. But with what are you going to stop the thought process? Even this

idea of stopping the thought process is of the mind. So your mind becomes split in two: the stopper and the stopped. Now you will never have any peace. Your own mind is continuously in struggle: one part is trying to stop it, another part is revolting against stopping. And remember, the part that is trying to stop it is very new and the part that you are trying to stop is very ancient. In this struggle, in this wrestling, you are not going to win. Your defeat can be said to be absolutely certain.

Many people have started meditation and then they stopped because finally they see this and say, "What is the point of having one simple glimpse of joy? It makes life even more terrible in comparison." If a blind man for one second sees the light and becomes blind again, now his blindness will be intolerable. Now he knows there is light, and he is unable to see it because he has gone blind again.

A meditator has to remember not to struggle with the thoughts. If you want to win, don't fight. That is a simple rule of thumb. If you want to win, simply don't fight. The thoughts will be coming as usual. You just watch, hiding behind your blanket; let them come and go. Just don't get involved with them.

The whole question is of not getting involved in any way -- appreciation or condemnation, any judgment, bad or good. Don't say anything, just remain absolutely aloof and allow the mind to move in its routine way. If you can manage... and this has been managed by thousands of buddhas, so there is not a problem. And when I say this can be managed, I am saying it on my own authority. I don't have any other authority.

I have fought and have tortured myself with fighting and I have known the whole split that creates a constant misery and tension. Finally seeing the point that victory is impossible, I simply dropped out of the fight. I allowed the thoughts to move as they want; I am no longer interested. And this is a miracle, that if you are not interested, thoughts start coming less. When you are utterly uninterested, they stop coming. And a state of no-thought, without any fight, is the greatest peace one has ever known. This is what we are calling the empty heart of the buddha.

ANOTHER LAYMAN ASKED, "WHEN I WIPE OUT ARISING THOUGHTS, THEY KEEP COMING UP FROM THE TRACES, NEVER STOPPING. HOW CAN I CONTROL THESE THOUGHTS?"

It seems that Bankei has authentic disciples interested in meditation, because all their questions are the eternal questions of meditators. The questioner is saying, "WHEN I WIPE OUT ARISING THOUGHTS, THEY KEEP COMING UP FROM THE TRACES, NEVER STOPPING. HOW CAN I CONTROL THESE THOUGHTS?"

The very idea of control is of fight. The very idea of control makes you involved. You don't have to stop them, you don't have to wipe them out. They will come back! You don't have to control them, because the very effort of controlling them will keep you engaged in the process of controlling... and a strange fact to be remembered is that the master is as much a slave to his own slave as the slave is a slave to the master. If you manage to control your thoughts, you are stuck with control. You cannot leave that

place, you cannot go away for a holiday. You are controlling your thoughts and your thoughts are controlling you.
You cannot move into meditation by controlling.
You can move into meditation only by being indifferent, just a watcher. Whether it comes or not makes no difference; just let the thoughts flow on their own accord and you stand aloof, just watching. The word `watching' simply means being a mirror, reflecting and not making any commentary. No mirror makes any commentary. No mirror says to you, "Aha, how beautiful!" It is not interested in whether you are beautiful or weird, sane or insane, standing on your feet or on your head. It makes no difference to the mirror, the mirror simply reflects.
The watcher is a mirror. It simply watches and remains empty. No content is caught by the mirror. Things come and go, the mirror does not cling to anything. The mirror is not in favor of something or against it. It has no notions about what passes before it.

I have heard about a Hassid rabbi... Hassidism comes closest to Zen. It is a small branch of rebellious Jews. They are not accepted by the orthodox, by the organized religion, but they have a small lineage of very beautiful people. If Judaism has contributed anything to humanity, it is Hassidism -- although they will not accept it. They condemn the Hassids because they are doing everything unorthodox, untraditional -- not conforming to the organized religion, being independent and rebellious.
This Hassid mystic was walking in the middle of the night towards the river, just to sit silently there. A watchman of a

great palace used to see him come every night at midnight. Finally it became impossible to resist, and the watchman stopped the Hassid and asked him, "I have been watching for months. Not even a single night have you missed; you go every night at midnight towards the river. What are you doing? I have seen you, I have followed you, because it is my work to keep watch around the palace and at first I was suspicious. This man comes every night, passes by the palace... so I have followed you, but you simply don't take any note of the palace or anybody following you. You simply go to the river and sit on the bank for hours. What are you doing there?"
The Hassid said, "I am also a watchman. Just as you are watching the palace, I am watching my own mind."

As the watching grows, without any struggle, the thoughts disappear. And when the heart is empty, you are the buddha.
BANKEI REPLIED, "WIPING OUT ARISING THOUGHTS IS LIKE WASHING BLOOD WITH BLOOD..."
I told you, he is a very simple man. Without philosophical jargon, he has managed simply, in ordinary day-to-day language, to say something very significant.
WIPING OUT ARISING THOUGHTS IS LIKE WASHING BLOOD WITH BLOOD; THOUGH THE FIRST BLOOD MAY BE REMOVED, THE WASHING BLOOD STILL STAINS; NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU WASH, THE STAIN IS NOT REMOVED.
Fighting with thoughts is simply removing thoughts with thoughts, washing blood with blood. This idea is also a

thought, that there should be no thoughts, that "I don't want any thoughts." That is also a thought. The watcher is not allowed to have even this prejudice. If they are there, he is happy. If they are not there, he is happy. He is simply unconcerned.

THIS NO-MIND IS ORIGINALLY UNBORN AND UNDYING AND WITHOUT ILLUSION. NOT REALIZING THIS, THINKING THAT THOUGHTS ARE EXISTENT THINGS, YOU ROAM AROUND IN THE ROUTINES OF BIRTH AND DEATH.

Bankei is saying, if you know a silent moment when there is no thought, you will be able to see that these thoughts are not realities. They are made of the same stuff as dreams are made of. They are waking dreams. You don't have to fight with them, you have just to watch silently. As your watching becomes deeper, they will start disappearing. And in their place arises the experience of no-mind, of emptiness, ORIGINALLY UNBORN AND UNDYING AND WITHOUT ILLUSION. NOT REALIZING THIS, THINKING THAT THOUGHTS ARE EXISTENT THINGS, YOU ROAM AROUND IN THE ROUTINES OF BIRTH AND DEATH.

It is your mind which has been taking you through birth and death in a circle, again and again, one misery after another misery. You have to jump out of this circle -- and the only way to jump out is simply to witness.

REALIZING THAT THOUGHTS ARE ONLY TEMPORARY APPEARANCES, YOU SHOULD LET THEM BE AS THEY START AND STOP, WITHOUT GRASPING OR REJECTING THEM.

Don't do anything at all.

IT IS LIKE IMAGES REFLECTED IN A MIRROR; SINCE THE MIRROR IS CLEAR AND BRIGHT, IT REFLECTS WHATEVER COMES BEFORE IT, BUT DOES NOT KEEP THE IMAGES.

Just be a mirror.

THE ENLIGHTENED NO-MIND IS INFINITELY BRIGHTER AND CLEARER THAN A MIRROR AND IS ALSO RADIANTLY AWARE, SO ALL THOUGHTS DISSOLVE IN THAT LIGHT WITHOUT LEAVING A TRACE. IF YOU CAN BELIEVE AND TRUST IN THIS TRUTH, NO MATTER HOW MUCH THEY COME UP, IT WON'T BE A HINDRANCE.

Again, I object to the word `belief'. There is no need. You are watching and you are seeing that the thoughts are disappearing like shadows. It is your experience. This sentence again brings the Christian mind in. IF YOU CAN BELIEVE AND TRUST IN THIS TRUTH.... Truth needs no trust, no belief. You simply know it. And once you have come to know it, you have attained freedom.

This knowing is not something like knowledge. This knowing is a transformation. You have moved from the mind to no-mind. You have moved from the body to no-body. You have moved from form to formlessness. It is a transformation. There is no question of believing or trusting or having faith. But I can understand the poor translator's difficulty. He is doing his best, but his conditionings pop up here and there, unintentionally.

I don't blame these translators, but they have created a difficulty for the West. Just reading them, the Western mind will not be able to understand exactly where they have translated wrongly. I can see where they are wrong.

And I can indicate to you that when you see, you see; when you know, you know -- no belief, no faith. Those are words belonging to the world of the blind. We are entering into the world of the buddhas.
A haiku... just a small statement, but far more valuable than great holy scriptures:

WHEN THE DREAMER WAKENS
HE IS ABSOLUTE ABSENCE.

You wake up every day -- you have this experience -- and the moment you wake up, dreams are absent. This is not the ultimate waking. When you wake up in meditation, not only are dreams absent, you are absent. Your absence makes it the empty heart of the buddha.

Question 1
Maneesha has asked:
OUR BELOVED MASTER,
YESTERDAY, I REMEMBERED TO REMEMBER MY EMPTINESS MORE OFTEN THAN ANY OTHER DAY. I REMEMBERED AT THE TAILOR'S -- A CRUCIAL CRITERION. I EVEN REMEMBERED DURING RUSH HOUR AT MARIAM CANTEEN -- THE ULTIMATE TEST.
I HAVE UNDERSTOOD YOU TO SAY THAT THROUGH MAKING AN EFFORT, BY AND BY WE WILL INSTILL IN OURSELVES A SELF-PERPETUATING AWARENESS THAT FINALLY DOES NOT NEED OUR ACTIVE REMEMBRANCE; IT

WILL HAVE BECOME A CONSTANT BACKDROP TO ALL WE DO.
THIS MUST BE DIFFERENT FROM SIMPLY CULTIVATING A GOOD HABIT, BUT JUST HOW IS IT DIFFERENT?

Maneesha, it is absolutely different from cultivating a good habit. You are not cultivating anything, you are simply remembering. You are remembering your own experience. In cultivating a good habit, you don't know whether it is really good or just a social convenience. You don't know who has decided that it is good, because in every society, culture, civilization, different things are thought to be good and different things are thought to be bad.
Cultivating a good habit is cultivating something borrowed -- that is the difference. I am not telling you to cultivate, I am telling you to remember your own experience as much as possible. Whenever it is possible, remember it. Give it more nourishment.
It is just like watering a rosebush, giving nourishment to your own experience. The good habit is not your experience.
You should have a look at `good habits.' They are all social conveniences. And they create a certain personality in you which is not authentic; it does not arise from your self. It comes from others -- parents, teachers, priests, social leaders.
Anything that comes from outside you, beware of it! However good it may seem, anything cultivated makes you a hypocrite. I want you to be non-hypocritical. I want you

to be authentically yourself. It is not a cultivation, it is simply a remembrance of your own intrinsic nature.
The buddha is not a foreigner to you; he is sitting exactly at the center of your consciousness. We have to constantly look within so that it becomes almost natural, a flowing current. You don't have to do anything, it is there. That's why I say it is the simplest thing and, unfortunately, because it is the most simple and the most obvious, it has been neglected. Nobody bothers about who you are. You yourself don't bother.

There was a great fair, and Mulla Nasruddin went to the fair. There was no place in any hotel. One manager took pity on him and said, "If you are ready to share a room, I can manage to convince this person, who is a gentleman -- it is a two-bed room which he is occupying."
Nasruddin had no objection; he said, "It is perfectly good for me, if he is ready."
The other man was perfectly ready also, and he said, "There is no problem. A tired man, going from hotel to hotel... there is no problem. I am going to sleep, and he is going to sleep."
Nasruddin entered the room, said to the man, "Hi!" And then, wearing his shoes, his turban, his coat, everything just as he was when he had come in, he went to bed. The man looked a little surprised! And of course, with shoes and turban and coat you cannot sleep, you cannot relax. So Mulla was moving from side to side, and because of his movement the other man could not sleep. The other man said, "Listen, fellow, I have never seen anybody sleeping in his shoes."

Mulla Nasruddin said, "Neither have I heard of anybody, but I am in trouble: I love to sleep naked just as you are sleeping naked..."
The man said, "What is the trouble?"
"The trouble is, I recognize myself with my turban, with my coat, with my shoes. If I am naked, in the morning who is going to decide who is who? You are naked, I am naked. Neither do I know who I am, nor do you know."
The man said, "The problem is really great! But some solution has to be found, because I have to sleep."
So he found a small toy that some baby must have left behind before they occupied the room. He took the toy and he said, "Let's do one thing: I will tie it to your foot, so you will know that you are the man with the toy."
Nasruddin said, "A great genius you are! Otherwise I was thinking I would die this night, suffocating, in the coat and the shoes." So he removed everything and the man tied the toy to his foot. Nasruddin started snoring immediately.
Then the man had an idea..."Let us see what happens." He changed the toy, tied it to his own foot, and went to sleep.
In the morning there was havoc! Nasruddin was running out in the open -- the whole hotel gathered.
The manager said, "What is the matter?"
He said, "The matter is so metaphysical. I had gone to sleep with the idea that I am the man with the toy. Certainly I am not the man with the toy; the other man has the toy. The problem is, if I am not Nasruddin, who am I? Certainly I am not Nasruddin because I had the toy; that was my symbol."

The other fellow was awakened and asked, "Do you know who you are?" He said, "I know only that I am the man with the toy."
Nasruddin said, "I had told you before that it was going to create trouble! Now for my whole life I am going to live not knowing who I am. You are Nasruddin, okay -- what about me?"

We can laugh, but that is how we know ourselves. What is your identity? Just a certain face, which goes on changing. Fortunately it does not change in jumps -- it does not know about sudden enlightenment, it only knows about the gradual. It goes on changing, but very gradually so you don't feel that it is a different face.
When you go to bed you have one face; when you wake up in the morning, it is not the same face. But because the change is so gradual, you don't take note of it. Otherwise everything is changing: your moustache is growing, your beard is growing, your face is becoming older. Everything in you is a flux -- but it is very gradual, so it seems almost at a standstill. Otherwise, you don't have any identity. If things were jumping so fast that in the night you go to sleep and in the morning you wake up and find somebody else's face... You look in the mirror -- "My god, this was never my face!" Or you had been a man and now you are a woman....
Nature has managed things to change very gradually but the change is happening, you have to be reminded. And you can feel this change only if you know something within you which is unchanging. Against the unchanging, you can see the changing.

That witness is the only unchanging element in the whole of existence. And when you become a witness and a great clarity arises in you, even small changes in you are taken note of, they reflect. You don't take any care of any change, but your mirror goes on reflecting how you are becoming older, how you are moving from life to death, from death to another womb. Your mirror in its clarity will allow you to know that you are a river, not a tank of water where nothing is moving.

Maneesha, the good habit has to be cultivated; you have to force it upon yourself. It is just a thin layer -- just a small scratch and you will forget your good habit and your natural response will come out. And your natural response is going to be barbarous because you have never gone beyond your barbarousness.

Meditation, to me, is the only civilization, the only culture, the only religion. It takes you beyond everything, above the clouds, and you can see everything in you from a bird's-eye view. You need not repeat anything; now you can be original, responsible. And to me that is the only good in existence: to respond with awareness, to respond spontaneously, not through cultivation.

I have heard about a man who was of such an angry temper that he killed his boy because he had disobeyed. And he forced his wife to jump into the well because she was trying to protect the child. The whole village gathered and the man was very much ashamed. He was so much ashamed that he said, "I will renounce the world. I am going to become a saint." A Jaina monk was in the city. He

went to the monk, and the monk said, "It is a very difficult path."
The man said, "Nothing is difficult for me. You can understand -- I killed my child, I forced my wife to jump into the well. Do you think anything is difficult for me?"
The Jaina monk said, "You will have to be naked."
The man immediately threw his clothes; even the monk was shocked and surprised. But he did not understand that this was also his angry temper. The monk initiated him, and he became very famous. He was given the name Shantidas; the name means `servant of peace'.
After twenty years... he was in New Delhi. One of his friends from the village happened to be in New Delhi, so he thought, "It will be good to see how far Shantidas has gone." So he went to see him -- there was a big crowd of worshippers. Shantidas looked at him... and he recognized him, but he did not show any sign of recognition. A man of his stature cannot recognize a villager, although they have been friends. The other man immediately understood: "Nothing has changed, because he has looked at me as if he has not recognized me -- but he has recognized me. I can see it on his face."
So the man came close and said, "I have a simple question to ask. What is your name?"
This irritated Shantidas very much. He said, "You don't read the newspapers? The whole capital knows my name. My name is Muni Shantidas."
The man said, "My memory is very bad. Will you please repeat it?"

Now this was too much. He said, "I have told you! And I will repeat it, but remember: if you ask again... You know me perfectly well. My name is Shantidas."
The man said, "Just once more."
And Shantidas took his staff and said, "Once more and I will kill you!"
The man said, "There is no need to do that great work. I just wanted to know whether you had changed."
Twenty years of cultivation of all the virtues, and just a little scratch and the old man comes out. All our morality, all our cultivation is superficial. My interest is not in any superficial cultivation but in a revolution, radical, which comes out of your meditation.

Before we go into meditation... You will be going to a faraway space within yourself. Just go laughing and joyous. Seriousness I hate -- I am really serious! I want my buddhas to be dancing and singing and enjoying. I want my buddhas not to be marble statues but living and breathing and loving.

Paddy and Seamus are at the bar of the Pickled President pub. Paddy is telling Seamus all about his recent trip to America.
"You know," says Paddy, "that guy Ronald Reagan, the president of America?"
"Yes," replies Seamus, scratching his head. "He's that old goat with the pet chimpanzee, right?"
"Right," says Paddy. "Well, he has got an office in this place called the White House."
"Really?" says Seamus. "Is it like the White House pub?"

"Probably," says Paddy, "but in his office, on his desk, he has got a button. He just has to push the button, and -- boom! -- the world is finished!"
"That doesn't sound like a good idea at all," says Seamus, slurping at another beer. "My grandfather is less senile than that Ronald Reagan, and we don't even allow him to push the buttons on the television!"

Pope the Polack finds that his Catholic Christian empire is crumbling. He orders all the Vatican researchers to try and find a solution to this impending disaster.
One day, Cardinal Catzass comes charging into the papal office.
"I've got it! I've got it!" screams Catzass. "In one of the old manuscripts, it says that God has left his final message on a tiny planet at the edge of the universe, called Hysteria."
Desperate, Pope the Polack empties out the safe of Banco Vaticano, and gives the money to the Russians to build him a rocket to take him to Hysteria.
After weeks of training, Pope the Polack, Cardinal Catzass, and a chimpanzee pilot, blast off from earth and hurtle through space towards the distant planet.
Light years later, they land at a tiny spaceport in the middle of the Hysteria desert, and the Polack pope does his thing kissing the dirt. On a signpost is written the words: "God's last message -- forty miles."
In full regalia, with his shepherd's staff, rocket-shaped hat, and space suit, Pope the Polack sets off, trudging through the desert. Cardinal Catzass waves the incense-burner as they go.

Ten hours and twenty miles later, both the Polack pope and Cardinal Catzass are on their hands and knees, gasping for water.
The next morning sees the pair of Polacks pulling themselves slowly through the sand.
That night, they reach the top of a small rise and look at the hills in the distance. There, in flashing neon lights, the whole hillside is lit up with God's final message to the universe.
It reads: "We apologize for any inconvenience."

It is midnight in a dark alley behind the Hoochee Koochee pub, and the fearless lawyer, Harry Hypojerk is wandering around drunk.
Suddenly he is approached by a shabby looking guy named Fred the Freak, who is wearing a large black overcoat, a big hat, and sunglasses.
"Hey," says Fred the Freak, "are you a lawyer?"
"Yes," slobbers Harry, straightening up his tie, "I am."
"And," says Fred the Freak, "do you handle criminal cases?"
"Yes, I do," replies Harry, wobbling a bit.
"Would you even help a thief?" asks Fred the Freak.
Harry blinks his eyes, adjusts his coat, and says, "Certainly, sir."
"Okay," says Fred the Freak, pulling out his gun. "Then you can start by helping me with your wallet!"

Nivedano...

Nivedano...

Be silent.
Close your eyes, feel your body to be completely frozen.
Look inwards, as deeply as you can reach. At the very end you will find your life source.
This life source is connected with the universal life.
To experience this is to be a buddha, utterly empty of the world but absolutely full of blissfulness, of benediction, of gratitude... of a deep prayer to existence, of thankfulness.
Look as closely as you can to the source of your life, the center of your consciousness, because you have to remember it later on while you are on the circumference of life... doing all kinds of things, but never for a single moment losing touch with your innermost life source.
Doing everything, but as a buddha.
The very awareness that "I am the buddha" is going to change your whole life pattern.

To make it more clear, Nivedano...

Relax.
Just watch the body, the mind.
They are not you, you are the watcher. And the watcher is another name for the buddha.

This is a blissful evening -- ten thousand people just drowned in an oceanic consciousness of watchfulness.
Ten thousand buddhas -- there has never been such an assembly.
Be very careful and cautious that you don't lose this watchfulness when you come back from the center to the circumference.

Nivedano...

Come back, but come with all the experience, full of joy, peace and silence.
With grace and gratitude, sit down as a buddha for a few moments.
This is going to be your final posture; slowly slowly, you will be settled in your buddha nature. And if we can create ten thousand buddhas, that is enough to save humanity -- ten thousand buddhas reaching to every nook and corner of the world, simply spreading love, compassion, awareness. And I don't think that if the world has so many buddhas, it can be destroyed by criminal politicians.
This is a crucial moment, of great responsibility and also of great challenge.
It is not only a question of your being a buddha, it is a question of saving this whole planet in its all beauty and greatness.
In the past, people used to be buddhas just for their own sake. Today, times are different. You have to be a buddha not only for your own sake, but for the sake of saving the whole world from nuclear weapons and the holders of nuclear weapons.
We have to create a great consciousness around the globe. That is our only protection against destructive science and the criminal politicians.
Remember: your responsibility is great, but it has to be a joy, not a duty. It has to be your love, your sharing of blissfulness, aliveness, your songs, your dances, your joy.

I am not telling you to be missionaries, I want you to be the mission. Missionaries have only carried borrowed knowledge. I want you to be the mission in the sense that you will be spreading your own experience. You will be radiating your own buddhahood. A wildfire has to be created around the globe, of consciousness.
This is the only hope for humanity, the only hope for the universe, to have this small planet so alive, so beautiful, so lovely. This is for the first time, that you are required to be buddhas not just for you, but to create an atmosphere in which a third world war cannot happen.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Can we celebrate the ten thousand buddhas?
Yes, Beloved Master.

## The Buddha: The Emptiness of the Heart

### Chapter #4

Chapter title: Enter the door of anatta
11 September 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
A MONK ASKED RINZAI, "WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE HEART WHICH DOES NOT CHANGE FROM MOMENT TO MOMENT?"
THE MASTER SAID: "FROM THE MOMENT YOU SET YOURSELF TO ASK THIS QUESTION, THERE IS

ALREADY THE DIFFERENCE, AND YOUR ESSENTIAL NATURE AND YOUR ACTION BECOME SEPARATE.... DO NOT BE DECEIVED. IN AND OUT OF THE WORLD THERE IS NOT A THING THAT HAS A SELF-NATURE, NOR A NATURE THAT IS PRODUCTIVE OF A SELF. ALL IS BUT EMPTY NAMES, AND THE VERY LETTERS OF THESE NAMES ARE ALSO EMPTY.

"IF YOU TAKE THESE EMPTY NAMES FOR REAL, YOU MAKE A BIG MISTAKE. FOR THOUGH THEY EXIST, THEY BELONG IN THE REALM OF DEPENDENT CHANGE, ARE LIKE ROBES TO PUT ON AND OFF.

"THERE IS THE ROBE OF BODHI, OF NIRVANA, OF DELIVERANCE, OF THE TRIKAYA, OF OBJECTIVE WISDOM, OF BODHISATTVAS AND OF BUDDHA.

"WHAT ARE YOU SEEKING IN THE REALM OF CHANGING DEPENDENCE? THE THREE VEHICLES AND THE TWELVE DIVISIONS OF THE TEACHINGS, ALL ARE SO MUCH OLD PAPER TO MOP UP MESSES. THE BUDDHA IS AN ILLUSORY PHANTOM. THE PATRIARCHS ARE OLD MONKS. YOU YOURSELVES, ARE YOU NOT BORN OF A MOTHER?

"IF YOU SEEK THE BUDDHA, YOU WILL BE CAUGHT BY THE BUDDHA DEMON; IF YOU SEEK THE PATRIARCHS, YOU WILL BE BOUND BY THE PATRIARCH DEMON. WHATEVER YOU ARE SEEKING, ALL BECOMES SUFFERING. IT IS BETTER TO HAVE NOTHING FURTHER TO SEEK."

Maneesha, the clouds and the rain and the silent bamboos, and ten thousand people sitting silently, is a rare phenomenon. This kind of assembly has disappeared from the world. It used to be, when Buddha was walking, or when Rinzai was alive.... You are representative of a forgotten past, which is not the past of the crowd but only the past of the awakened ones.

Rinzai's statement is tremendously significant, but before I say something about it, as a preface....

Man's personality has been divided in concentric circles. The first circle is the body. Within it, another circle is the mind. Within that, another third circle is the heart. And within the third circle, the center is the self. Buddha goes beyond it.

The atheists belong to and believe only in the first circle. They deny all other circles as imagination. Mind also is a function of the body. The theists believe in all the four circles: the body, the mind, the heart, and the self. Their insistence is that the first three circles are insignificant or illusory, they are not your true reality. Your true reality is the fourth center.

Buddha is breaking new ground. He goes beyond the fourth; he goes beyond the self. No-self, anatta, is your true existence. When you are not, you are. Of course, not in the same form as you have known yourself. You are spread all over the cosmos.

This is something unique, for which Buddha fought for forty-two years, because every religion stops at the self, the atma. Buddha is alone in the whole field, in saying that unless you go beyond self, you cannot enter into the universal, into the cosmic. You cannot become the rains

and you cannot become the bamboos and you cannot become the roses... Why remain contained in a small bag? Why not be the whole? According to Buddha, to be the whole is the only holiness.

Rinzai is making his statement in this context; and very perfectly.

A MONK ASKED RINZAI, "WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE HEART WHICH DOES NOT CHANGE FROM MOMENT TO MOMENT?"

The problem is perennial. The master says something -- of course he has to use words, language, concepts, but that is not what he wants to say. That is sheer helplessness, sheer poverty of language; nothing can be done about it. We have to use the marketplace language in a world where neither the body exists, nor the mind exists, nor the self exists, but just a silence. How to convey it? Some word has to be used, some language, to communicate. And immediately the problem arises -- the disciple clings to the words.

It has to be repeated again and again for the disciple that the word is not the message. The word is just a vehicle of an invisible message. That message is not contained in the word, it is around the word. Don't cling to the word, just see the hint.

But it is very difficult. We are accustomed to understand language by understanding the word. But when you come to a buddha, you have to understand language in a new way. You have to understand the gaps between the words. There the buddha is present. In the words he has to use the mind, but when there is a gap, that gap shows his emptiness, his nothingness, his beyondness.

A great Sufi mystic kept a holy book... Everybody thought that it must be very mysterious, because he never allowed anyone to see within it, or read it. He kept it just under his pillow, and when there was nobody around, he would take it from its place and open the book, and would go through all the gestures of reading.

It became more and more mysterious as he became more and more famous. Perhaps he is keeping something secret, to be delivered only to the chosen few. Again and again he was asked, "Why don't you talk about the book?"

He said, "I cannot talk about the book. When I am gone, then you can read it; not while I'm here because I cannot explain what is written in the book. But when I am gone it is none of my responsibility. You read it -- whether you understand it or not is your business."

It became more and more mysterious. People were trying in every way to at least have a look. When everybody else was gone, somebody would be hiding on the roof, removing a tile and looking. But the moment he would remove the tile, the master would close the book.

The moment he died -- he was so much loved -- but the moment he died, people were more concerned about the book than about his death. They immediately took out the book, and they were shocked and surprised: the book contained nothing! It was an empty book. They turned all the pages... somewhere, perhaps, the message. They went on again and again; perhaps they had missed the page where the message is. But there was nothing at all.

For one thousand years, the book had been given from the master to his successor, a disciple. It is very significant; it says, "Don't look at the words, read the emptiness."

This monk is asking:
"WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE HEART WHICH DOES NOT CHANGE FROM MOMENT TO MOMENT?"
It cannot be his own experience in any case, because the one who knows will not ask such a question. When the heart is empty it has no attitude. If it has an attitude, how can it be empty? When the heart is empty, this question cannot arise:
"WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE HEART WHICH DOES NOT CHANGE FROM MOMENT TO MOMENT?"
THE MASTER SAID, "FROM THE MOMENT YOU SET YOURSELF TO ASK THIS QUESTION, THERE IS ALREADY THE DIFFERENCE..."
He is making him aware that the moment you ask this question, you have created the difference. Just as the question arises in you, your heart is no longer empty. And anybody who gives you an answer will make your heart again full of attitudes, answers, questions... It will lose its emptiness; and that emptiness is its beauty, its purity, its grandeur.
Nobody else has understood the beauty of emptiness, of being nobody, of being just a nothing, a pure silence where nothing moves. Gautam Buddha stands as the highest peak of the Himalayas. There have been many mystics, but Gautam Buddha's height, his purity, his clarity, is incomparable.
Rinzai and others are simply conveying the same experience. Of course they are not so articulate as Gautam

Buddha himself, but everybody is trying his best to satisfy the disciple, the questioner.

THE MASTER SAID: "FROM THE MOMENT YOU SET YOURSELF TO ASK THIS QUESTION, THERE IS ALREADY THE DIFFERENCE..."

You are no more the same. The empty heart does not ask anything; everything comes to it on its own accord.

You just look at the rains... We have not burned any woman on a funeral pyre; neither have we burned any Shankaracharya. We don't indulge in such stupid ideas, but Poona has never known such rains as it has known this year. What is the reason? When ten thousand people sit silently, the clouds come by themselves. You just be silent, and everything comes simultaneously to you -- and in abundance! Nature is absolutely ready to give up all its treasures to the empty heart.

But rather than asking the question, become the empty heart, and you will see miracles happening around you for which you have not done anything. They are sheer gifts of nature to the man who has an empty heart. He deserves it, although he does not demand it; he is fulfilled, although he does not ask for it.

His fulfillment is a totally different phenomenon. It is not filled with any objective richness, fame, respectability, or power. He is filled with a deep inner dance, a laughter for no reason, a joy just like a small child. Just being is itself a gift; a blissfulness surrounds him, a great field of silence and presence.

And this is for those who are only at the center. Buddha wants you to go beyond the center.

In Pali, the self is called atta, and no-self is called anatta. Buddha is the first man in history who has used anatta: no-self is your reality, you don't have any self. You are just like an onion: you go on peeling it, thinking that beyond this layer you will find something. You find another cover to peel off. You go on peeling, and finally nothing is left in your hands. That nothing is anatta.

You are neither the body, nor the mind, nor the heart, nor even the self. You are just a pure awareness beyond all kinds of cages. But don't ask a question. Rather experience it, because it is not a question-and-answer thing. It is not something to be believed, it is something to be lived.

Rinzai says,

"The moment you ask, YOUR ESSENTIAL NATURE AND YOUR ACTION BECOME SEPARATE.... DO NOT BE DECEIVED. IN AND OUT OF THE WORLD THERE IS NOT A THING THAT HAS A SELF-NATURE..."

He is very clear. Not a single thing in the whole world has a self-nature, because if things have self-nature, then they will never be able to merge into the universal. They will always remain separate islands; tiny, imprisoned in their own body-mind-self.

He is really a man of courage to say,

"THERE IS NOT A SINGLE THING THAT HAS A SELF-NATURE, NOR A NATURE THAT IS PRODUCTIVE OF A SELF. ALL IS BUT EMPTY NAMES, AND THE VERY LETTERS OF THESE NAMES ARE ALSO EMPTY.

"IF YOU TAKE THESE EMPTY NAMES FOR REAL, YOU MAKE A BIG MISTAKE. FOR THOUGH THEY EXIST, THEY BELONG IN THE REALM OF

DEPENDENT CHANGE, ARE LIKE ROBES TO PUT ON AND OFF."

You have been in many bodies, in many species. You have changed your clothes many times, you have changed your residence many times; you have changed your address and name many times. It has been for centuries that in sannyas you are given a new name. It is indicative: you consciously change the name so that you know it is just a fiction. The old name had become a great reality; the new name is not yet conditioned. It is symbolic, that everything in you is continuously changing, eternally. Even your self is not the same, it goes on changing. Then what remains?

Rinzai is very straightforward. He says, "THERE IS THE ROBE OF BODHI," -- even enlightenment is a robe, don't get identified with it -- "THERE IS THE ROBE OF BODHI, OF NIRVANA, OF DELIVERANCE, OF THE TRIKAYA -- the three bodies we have talked about. But these are all changing layers; nothing of them is to be made a permanent home. "... OF OBJECTIVE WISDOM, OF BODHISATTVAS AND OF BUDDHA." Even if you think you are a buddha, don't get identified with it, it is just a passing phase. It is just a bridge to nothingness. The most perfect bridge, of course, but still a bridge.

"WHAT ARE YOU SEEKING IN THE REALM OF CHANGING DEPENDENCE?" Where everything is changing, what are you seeking? Even the seeker is changing while you are seeking. Stop seeking, stop searching, just be. And you will be surprised: the last stop is the self. It is a kind of feeling of am-ness, is-ness -- but it too is just a last stop, not yet a home. One step more, from

self to no-self. Just disappear without any condition, as a perfume disappears into the air.

Gautam Buddha's contribution is certainly the greatest that any man has made to humanity.

"WHAT ARE YOU SEEKING IN THE REALM OF CHANGING DEPENDENCE? THE THREE VEHICLES AND THE TWELVE DIVISIONS OF THE TEACHINGS, ALL ARE SO MUCH OLD PAPER TO MOP UP MESSES. THE BUDDHA IS AN ILLUSORY PHANTOM."

Other religions would be very much disturbed. No Christian can say that Jesus Christ is a phantom; no Hindu can say that Krishna is a phantom. This much courage has been shown only by Zen masters. It is not that they don't love Buddha -- they love him, they worship him -- but truth is truth. The Buddha of your conceptions is an illusory phantom. You have to go beyond it. You have to be simply nothing.

"THE PATRIARCHS ARE OLD MONKS. YOU YOURSELVES, ARE YOU NOT BORN OF A MOTHER?"

If you are born of a mother, then you are bound to die sooner or later. Every birth makes it certain that you are going to die. Everything is so illusory; what are you seeking?

This is a totally different approach from that of any other religion. They all tell you to seek and search. But Rinzai is saying, "Stop all seeking and searching, and just be." And look deeply into your being, and even your being will start melting like ice in June. Not even a trace will be left of you. You will have merged into the totality of existence.

On the surface it is frightening; that's why Zen could not become a worldwide phenomenon. If you tell a person "I can teach you how to be poor," he will say, "Get lost! I am already poor."

But if somebody says, "I can teach you how to be rich," then certainly you will respect the man and will listen to his wisdom. There are thousands of books around the world, telling people how to be successful, how to be rich. I have not seen a single book which says how to be poor, how to be a failure.

And Buddha was teaching how to be nothing! People have asked him, "What kind of teaching is this? At least right now we are. We may be in misery, we may be in trouble, but at least we are. Teach us how not to be in trouble, how not to be miserable.... Rather than that you teach us just to disappear!"

But Buddha knows better. He knows that as long as you are, you are going to be in misery, you are going to be in trouble. The very separation from the cosmos is the source of all your miseries. It may take different forms, but the real form, the reality, is that you have taken yourself apart from this vast existence.

So Buddha said, "I am trying so that you will not have any trouble, any misery. Just be nothing; then how can you be troubled? Who will be troubled?"

He has found one of the greatest truths ever found: that you and your misery are not two things. You are the misery, you are the problem. Your mind tells you that this is not so: "We can change the misery." That is true.... The misery you can change, but you will change it for another misery. You can go on changing -- everybody is doing that -- from one

misery to another misery. But you never come to realize that the real misery is that you are. You are separate from existence.

Buddha is hard, but absolutely true: until you dissolve yourself into the totality, you will be troubled. The very separation is the cause of your hell.

"IF YOU SEEK THE BUDDHA, YOU WILL BE CAUGHT BY THE BUDDHA DEMON..." These Zen masters have a courage totally unknown to any other religion.

"IF YOU SEEK THE BUDDHA, YOU WILL BE CAUGHT BY THE BUDDHA DEMON; IF YOU SEEK THE PATRIARCHS, YOU WILL BE BOUND BY THE PATRIARCH DEMON. WHATEVER YOU ARE SEEKING, ALL BECOMES SUFFERING."

Seeking, in short, is the source of suffering.

Do not seek, just be.

Don't go anywhere, just remain at your center. A small movement, and you have missed the point. And this center of your being is just the center of a soap bubble. But to reach to the center is to have at least reached to the door of the temple.

Now don't be afraid, and enter the door of nothingness, of no-selfness, of anatta. Let your whole being be filled with the sense that "I am not; existence is."

To understand Gautam Buddha, or his disciples who have attained to this nothingness, is absolutely impossible with the mind. Mind will always want to be. The mind will always think, "What a strange teaching, to make so much arduous effort not to be. With this much effort, you could have become the richest man in the world. With so much

effort, you could have become a prime minister, a president. And this strange fellow has himself dropped his kingdom, and is now teaching people how to be nothing."
I don't think... if somebody writes a book, like Dale Carnegie -- Dale Carnegie's book has sold second only to the Holy Bible. HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE is the title of his book. And he has certainly made many friends -- there are Dale Carnegie Clubs all around the world, where his book is read. They run classes, and schools, and courses. Looking at his book, you will see: he is creating a science of hypocrisy. Whether you want to smile or not, you should smile -- even at a stranger, because one never knows, tomorrow you may need him.
I have been doing just the opposite: how to influence people, and increase your enemies! And I think I am more successful than Dale Carnegie.
Zen could not become a worldwide experience for the simple reason that nobody is ready for that great explosion in which you are lost. But think for a moment: what are you? What are you going to preserve? And what is the point, what will you do with it? Even if you discover your self, then what are you going to do with it?
You will create new miseries, new troubles, new engagements, new appointments, new love affairs ... because you cannot just be. Otherwise you will start thinking to yourself, "Have I gone mad?" No girlfriend, no boyfriend, just sitting in your room, being nobody... You will jump out of your room, take your rented bicycle, and run away to find someone! You know that there will be troubles, but it is better: at least those troubles keep you

alive. Just a good fight in the pub, coming home drunk, staggering, but at least you are.
But what is the point?
Zen's experience is that unless you go beyond self and start enjoying being nobody; unless nothingness becomes your blissfulness, you have missed your life completely. It is the greatest challenge that can be given to any human being. And only those who have the lion's heart have followed the path of Zen -- even in China, just a small stream; in Japan a very small stream.
When I was arrested in America, the first telegram came from a Zen master in Japan, to Ronald Reagan, with a copy to me. It said, "You are doing the worst, most stupid thing that one can conceive of." The jailer came running to me and he said, "Who is this man?"
I said, "I don't know, but certainly he is a man of understanding."
The jailer said, "He may be a man of understanding, but he does not know manners -- calling the president stupid!"
I said, "You don't know about Zen! When somebody is stupid, they call it stupid. You can inform the president that I agree with the Zen master."

Zen has been a path of the very few chosen ones who have guts enough even to disappear.
"WHATEVER YOU ARE SEEKING," says Rinzai, "ALL BECOMES SUFFERING."
Western psychology has not come to this understanding. We try to help people out of one suffering, and another is coming on. Nobody except Zen has come to the realization that every seeking becomes suffering. It does not matter

what you are seeking -- money, power, richness, fame, or even if you are trying to be a buddha -- you are creating suffering for yourself.
"IT IS BETTER TO HAVE NOTHING FURTHER TO SEEK."
Just stop! So when I say during your meditations... I am not saying that you have to become a buddha. That will become a seeking, and a suffering. I am saying you are a buddha; just recognize it, and there ends the matter. Once you recognize you are the buddha you will melt, when the time and season is right, into the ultimate reality. To be the buddha is only the beginning of the end; but what a beautiful beginning, and what a beautiful end. Without any struggle, allowing existence to take over, is the greatest ecstasy in the world.
Rinzai has made a very strong and honest statement. I hope it will be helpful to all of you who are on the path of meditation. Remember, this is the path of disappearing.

A haiku by Uko:
CUCKOO,
TAKE ME UP TO WHERE
CLOUDS DRIFT.

He is saying the same thing: TAKE ME UP TO WHERE CLOUDS DRIFT, into the universal, into the sky; I don't want to remain confined in the body, the mind, the heart, and the self. Just take me away from all these.
This is what Gautam Buddha calls freedom. Less than that is a compromise.

Question 1
Maneesha has asked:
OUR BELOVED MASTER,
I THINK I HEARD YOU SAY RECENTLY THAT WHEN WE ARE AWARE OF OUR EMPTINESS, WHEN WE ARE CONSCIOUS -- EVEN IF IT IS ONLY FOR AN INSTANT -- WE ARE IN THE SAME STATE THAT YOU ARE ALWAYS IN. BUT, ISN'T IT THAT YOUR STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS IS NOT JUST QUANTITATIVELY DIFFERENT FROM OURS -- IN THAT YOU ARE CONSCIOUS TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY -- BUT IS QUALITATIVELY DIFFERENT?
I LOVE YOU AND I LOVE THAT SPACE OF EMPTINESS THAT I FEEL. WHY THEN THIS RELUCTANCE TO ACCEPT THAT MY EMPTINESS IS THE SAME AS YOURS?

Maneesha, it is an ancient question, whether there is any relationship between quantity and quality, or no relationship. Science has finally decided on the fact that they are interchangeable.
In a very ordinary experiment, you can boil water to ninety-nine degrees; it will not evaporate. The moment it comes to a hundred degrees, it will evaporate. Now certainly, the evaporated water and the liquid water, although they are both water, have a qualitative difference.
On the other hand, if you go on lowering the temperature the water becomes solid ice. Ice, water, vapor -- the inner thing is the same, but their outer expression is not only quantitatively different, it is qualitatively different. For

example, you cannot quench your thirst with vapor. In the first place, to catch hold of it in a glass is going to be a difficult task; and even if you catch hold of it, it is now nothing but H2O. It has disintegrated into its basic elements.

Do you think that, by repeating `H2O', like a transcendental meditation, your thirst will be quenched? You simply need water. H2O, the mantra, will not do.

I can understand your reluctance to accept it. It is because of your love. The more you love me, the more you will see the heights of my consciousness and the more you will see the depths of your consciousness. Your love is going to reveal the dark valleys of your being, and the sunlit peaks of my consciousness. And because you love me, you cannot simply shut your eyes and deny that there are any sunlit peaks. Your love will grow more, to the point that you have to travel the path from your valleys to the sunlit peaks of the mountain.

The only thread between the master and the disciple is that of love. It is not belief, it is not faith, it is pure and simple love. You have seen in the master your own ultimate realization; you have seen in the master what you can be. Just a little turning in, and you will be the same.

And your reluctance is natural. You have loved me; you would not like to be equal to me, that seems to be insulting. But it is not insulting, it only logically looks insulting. Your love turns into a deep gratitude.

I will tell you about Sariputta, a famous philosopher at the time of Gautam Buddha. He became a disciple of Gautam Buddha just by seeing him. He himself had thousands of followers, but the moment he saw Buddha, he told his

disciples that now they were free: "If you want to remain with me, you can, but now I am in a strange love with this man." And he became enlightened within two years. The day he became enlightened, his eyes were full of tears, and he was holding Buddha's feet. Buddha said, "Why are you crying?"

He said, "I cannot accept that I am equal to you. It is just impossible for me to think that now there is no difference between my consciousness and yours."

Buddha said, "Sariputta, come to your senses! It is my whole effort to bring you to the same consciousness, to the same height, as I am. Don't be worried about the fact that you have become an equal. You have always been an equal; it's just that you never realized it. Your gratitude is enough, but don't feel reluctant to accept your buddhahood."

This is going to happen to many of you. But don't be reluctant. Your mind will say, "You can rise as much as possible, but don't rise to the height of your master." There are teachers in the world, fakes, frauds, who would not like you to rise to their heights -- if they have any. The authentic master is insistent that you should become the same, you should dwell on the same heights. That is, in a way, the definition of an authentic master. For him, you are already the same, you just don't recognize it. The whole effort is to bring the recognition to you.

The rains have come to listen to your laughter. Poor rains, nobody laughs at them. Nobody even says hello; on the contrary -- people are carrying umbrellas. That is just insulting.

Pope the Polack is invited to the White House to give a special speech on the role of the Vatican in saving the world. As he is speaking to a group of people on the lawn, he coughs, and his false teeth fall out onto the ground and break.
Seeing the situation, a nearby guest digs into his pocket and pulls out a set of dentures. Embarrassed, the pope fumbles around with them, but because they are too big, he cannot get the teeth into his mouth.
Then the guest reaches into another pocket and offers another set of false teeth. But this time they are too small.
The guest pulls out a third set from his back pocket, and the toothless Polack shoves them into his mouth. These teeth fit.
Nervous, but happy, Pope the Polack turns to the guest and says, "Wow! That is great. Are you a dentist?"
"Nope," replies the guest, with a wink, "I am an undertaker!"

It will take a little time for you to get it. But in the middle of the night, don't forget to get it!

Father Fumble, the newly ordained priest, goes for some practical Catholic experience with his teacher, Father Fungus.
The two priests sit together inside the confessional box of the Sacred Virgin's Chapel, and listen to all the crimes against God Almighty.
"I have fornicated with two strange men this week," confesses Katie. "Please forgive me, Father."

"You are forgiven, my child," says Father Fungus. "Just put forty dollars in the money box and say ten Hail Marys."
"I have been adulterous with my neighbor," pleads Polly, the next sinner.
"You are forgiven, my daughter," says Father Fungus. "Twenty dollars in the box and ten Ave Marias."
"So," says Fungus to Father Fumble. "Do you get it? All the rates are written in this little book, and if you have any problems, I will be upstairs."
Father Fumble sits alone in the confessional, and in comes the next customer.
"Father," confesses Betty, "I have just given my boyfriend Boris a blowjob."
"Blowjob?" says Father Fumble, thumbing through his book. "Blowjob?"
Then he shouts upstairs, "Hey, Father Fungus! What do I do for a blowjob?"
"Tell her to put ten dollars in the box," calls back Father Fungus, "and send her up here!"

This you get perfectly well!

Swami Deva Coconut manages to get a job on Nancy Reagan's personal staff. One day, he overhears Nancy complaining to Ed Meese that she and Ronnie are having a lot of trouble with their love life.
At a suitable moment, Swami Coconut takes Nancy aside and suggests that she should try mounting on top of her husband, instead of lying underneath in the traditional missionary position.

Nancy's Fundamentalist Christian morals are rather shocked, but she is so desperate that she agrees to give it a go.
The next morning, a delighted Nancy meets Coconut in the library.
"It was like magic," gushes Nancy, breathlessly. "It was wonderful. But tell me, Mr. Coconut, how did you know a simple thing like that would make all the difference?"
"Easy," replies Coconut. "Everyone knows that Ronald Reagan can only fuck up!"

Nivedano...

Nivedano...

Be silent.
Feel your whole body to be frozen.
Close your eyes.
This beautiful evening, this great rain, this tremendous silence, will be of help to you to go inwards as deeply as possible.
Go in...
Deeper and deeper.
You have to cross all the lines I told you about... the body, the mind, the heart. Reach to the self, the center; and then you can take a jump into eternity, into the ultimate cosmos. Then you can open your wings, and fly in the sky.
The whole effort of meditation is to give you a taste of ultimate freedom. So don't be afraid of anything -- there is nothing to be afraid of.

It is your own sky, it is your own truth, it is your own originality.
This is the buddha in you. Recognize, remember -- and remember to remember afterwards.
To be a buddha is just a remembrance, it is not an achievement.
You are already it.

To make it clear, Nivedano...

Relax, let go.
The body will be dying, see it as a corpse; with it the mind will be gone.
Just a watcher remains eternally with you.
It is your essential nature, but the watcher is not the self.
The watcher is a no-self, it is nothingness.
It is the empty heart, it is an opening into the universe.

Let the experience sink deep in every fibre of your being, because it has to be your very life style. In your actions it has to be present. Around the clock you have to carry a remembrance of your being a buddha, and this will transform all your actions and responses.
This is the miracle... because we don't cultivate any morality, we simply awaken your buddha. And all morality, all truth, all sincerity, and all honesty simply follow your remembrance of the buddha, as a shadow.

Nivedano...

Come back, but come back as buddhas, without any hesitation. Bring out with you the experience of the innermost core.

Sit down for a few moments, without any reluctance, as a buddha. It is your right, your birthright. It is nothing like an achievement, it is just remembering a forgotten language. You are a buddha whether you know or not. It is better to know it,

because then it transforms your whole life, brings new joys and new flowers, new blessings, new understandings, new clarities and perceptions. It is a total change.

Morality has to be cultivated; it is false. But to remember one's buddhahood... the morality comes as a shadow, on its own. Then it has a beauty, a tremendous grace; then you are not doing it, it is simply happening.

To enter into the world of spontaneity and happenings is the only reason why you are here. We are not searching or seeking anything. We are simply trying to remember who we are, what it is that is the center of our life. Finding the center, it will not be long before suddenly you will realize: this center is also the center of the whole existence -- we are all connected in the roots.

And the experience of being one with existence is the greatest and the most valuable experience that is possible for consciousness.

You are getting ready to face a miracle: inch by inch, you are moving closer and closer to the cliff, which I call the center. One step more, beyond it, and you will know that you were never separate from existence; you have never been born, and you have never died -- you are an eternity.

The joy that it brings, and the ecstasy that it brings, and the dance that it brings... it makes your whole life a celebration.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Can we celebrate the ten thousand buddhas?
Yes, Beloved Master!

## The Buddha: The Emptiness of the Heart

**Chapter #**5
Chapter title: In the blink of an eye
12 September 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
DAIO SAID TO GENCHU:
SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, THE ENLIGHTENED ANCESTORS APPEARING IN THE WORLD RELIED JUST ON THEIR OWN FUNDAMENTAL EXPERIENCE TO REVEAL SOMETHING OF WHAT IS BEFORE US: SO WE SEE THEM KNOCKING CHAIRS AND RAISING WHISKS, HITTING THE GROUND AND BRANDISHING STICKS, BEATING A DRUM OR ROLLING BALLS...
DAIO CONTINUED:
EVEN THOUGH THIS IS SO, EMINENT GENCHU, YOU HAVE TRAVELED ALL OVER AND SPENT A LONG TIME IN MONASTERIES. DON'T WORRY ABOUT SUCH OLD CALENDAR DAYS AS THESE I

MENTIONED -- JUST GO BY THE LIVING ROAD YOU SEE ON YOUR OWN; GOING EAST, GOING WEST, LIKE A HAWK SAILING THROUGH THE SKIES. IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE YOU CROSS OVER TO THE OTHER SIDE.

ON ANOTHER OCCASION DAIO SAID TO KUSHO: THE CAUSE AND CONDITIONS OF THE ONE GREAT CONCERN OF THE ENLIGHTENED ONES IS NOT APART FROM YOUR DAILY AFFAIRS. THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HERE AND THERE. IT PERVADES PAST AND PRESENT, SHINING THROUGH THE HEAVENS, MIRRORING THE EARTH. THAT IS WHY IT IS SAID THAT EVERYTHING IN THE LAST MYRIAD EONS IS RIGHT IN THE PRESENT.

WE VALUE THE GREAT SPIRIT OF A HERO ONLY IN THOSE CONCERNED. BEFORE ANY SIGNS BECOME DISTINCT, BEFORE ANY ILLUSTRATION IS EVIDENT, CONCENTRATE FIERCELY, LOOKING, LOOKING, COMING OR GOING, TILL YOUR EFFORT IS COMPLETELY RIPE.

IN THE MOMENT OF A THOUGHT, YOU ATTAIN UNION. THE MIND OF BIRTH AND DEATH IS DESTROYED AND SUDDENLY YOU CLEARLY SEE YOUR ORIGINAL APPEARANCE, THE SCENE OF YOUR NATIVE LAND; EACH PARTICULAR DISTINCTLY CLEAR. YOU THEN SEE AND HEAR JUST AS THE BUDDHAS DID, KNOW AND ACT AS THE ENLIGHTENED ANCESTORS DID.

Maneesha, one who is interested in knowing who he is has two ways open to him. One is the way of knowledge: reading scriptures, studying old scholars, collecting as many concepts about one's being as possible. That is the cheaper way. There would be nothing wrong if it were only that it is cheaper, but it is wrong, too.

The second way is not to bother about others. Howsoever valuable those scriptures may be, they cannot give you even a single glimpse of your fundamental nature. A thousand buddhas together cannot force you to become a buddha.

It is your essential right to know your fundamental nature or not to know it. You cannot be forced by teachers, by parents. Yes, they can force knowledge upon you, they can force ideologies upon you. They do force religion, without understanding that if you are full of ideologies you become almost crippled, prevented from knowing your own nature. You are so burdened with borrowed knowledge that you cannot travel to the higher mountains. You have to drop all your weight. As you go high even breathing becomes difficult; even to have your clothes on becomes difficult. You have to drop all weight, you have to become weightless.

What is true in mountaineering is also true in the inner world of consciousness. If you want to go in you will have to cut through, in a single blow, all the knowledge that has been given to you. Just burn it! It is better to be ignorant on the path -- because at least ignorance is innocence -- than to be knowledgeable.

Knowledgeability is the greatest hindrance to knowing, because you think as if you already know. But there is no

`as if' in existence. Either you know it or you don't know it. And there is no way of communicating it through words; all words will be misunderstood. Only the presence of a living master, a wordless silence, can perhaps become a glimpse, a triggering point in you. It is not being done by the master; it happens in your receptivity, in your openness. Something clicks. There is no other word to replace the word `click'.

Daio is saying to Genchu:

SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, THE ENLIGHTENED ANCESTORS APPEARING IN THE WORLD RELIED JUST ON THEIR OWN FUNDAMENTAL EXPERIENCE TO REVEAL SOMETHING OF WHAT IS BEFORE US...

Those who have known -- their difficulty is that of communication. You know the taste of salt but you cannot convey it through language. Language has limitations, and the experience of your fundamental nature is of the unlimited. To bring the unlimited to the limitations of language is a tremendously risky task. Even though it is done with absolute accuracy, it is going to fail. Seeing this, the ancient masters have not relied on scriptures, have not even relied on language. They are their own authority; it does not matter whether all the scriptures of the world say something else. They know the taste of truth. Their authority is not derived from their scholarship; they are the authority unto themselves.

It brings a problem, because they cannot use scriptures; they cannot use ordinary means of communication. Hence, they used anything that was in front of them.

... SO WE SEE THEM KNOCKING CHAIRS AND RAISING WHISKS, HITTING THE GROUND AND

BRANDISHING STICKS, BEATING A DRUM OR ROLLING BALLS...

Anything, just to wake you up. Because the question is not of teaching you a philosophical understanding; the question is of existential awakening.

When for the first time the West became aware of Zen masters, they thought, "These people are absolutely crazy! Somebody is asking about truth and you hit him?" Obviously, it looked crazy -- and the more so because the person who is being hit, in deep gratitude, bows down and touches your feet! The West was completely puzzled. When Zen books started being translated for the first time, the Western philosophers were hitting their heads. They had never heard that by slapping a man who is asking a question, you are answering him. They had no idea what was implied in this hitting or slapping. One Zen master even threw a man from the second-story window to the ground. The man had come to ask, "What is truth?" Not only did the master give him fractures, he jumped on top of him and asked him, "Do you get it?"

And the poor fellow had to say, "Yes, Master."

This kind of incident was absolutely unknown outside the Zen tradition. But you have to understand it, what is implied. When a Zen master hits, he is saying, "You are the truth, and you are asking about it? Are you kidding? You are the buddha and you are asking what the buddha is?" By hitting you he is simply saying, "Look at yourself, rather than asking like a beggar from one place to another. Just go in and look." His hitting is a shock; in that shock perhaps your thinking may stop, there is every possibility. You

were not expecting a hit; you had come with deep humbleness, touching the feet of the master....

And sometimes it has happened that the person has not even asked the question and the master has hit him, because his very coming and touching the feet means he has some question to ask. It does not matter what question, you deserve a good hit! It is throwing you back to yourself; it is saying in an existential way that you are the answer -- don't seek it anywhere.

Having no other way to communicate, they devised anything that might wake you up, throw you upon yourself. Asking a question means you are putting the responsibility on the master to answer you. But his answer cannot be your answer.

Nobody else's answer can be your answer. Your answer has to grow within you, just as a rose grows. That's what the master is saying by hitting you: Don't go anywhere, just go in; stop asking, stop begging, because you are already in the kingdom of the buddhas but you have not looked in.

Perhaps a good hit, perhaps the master throwing the disciple from the window may awaken him from his somnambulistic state -- the state in which we all are... half asleep, half awake, just at the minimum awake.

The major part of our being is fast asleep. According to modern psychologists, only one part out of ten is awake; nine-tenths are fast asleep. With this much sleep within you, it is impossible to know the truth, to know love, to know the nature of existence.

Daio is saying that these ancient masters had to fall back on strange methods, but there was simply one reason: in some way to wake you up.

DAIO CONTINUED:
EVEN THOUGH THIS IS SO, EMINENT GENCHU, YOU HAVE TRAVELED ALL OVER AND SPENT A LONG TIME IN MONASTERIES. DON'T WORRY ABOUT SUCH OLD CALENDAR DAYS AS THESE I MENTIONED -- JUST GO BY THE LIVING ROAD YOU SEE ON YOUR OWN.

He is saying all the old masters and the buddhas and the patriarchs are old calendars -- don't be bothered about them. Follow the living stream which you see with your own eyes -- no belief, no faith, simply be clear. Zen requires of the disciple a clarity, an intelligence, an awareness, which have not been required by any other religion in the world or by any other philosophy in the world. Its requirement is absolute.

Daio says, "Don't worry about such old calendars. JUST GO BY THE LIVING ROAD, from where your life is coming." From whatever point your life is arising, that is the living road. It is not outside you. You have to dig deep within yourself for the roots and for the way that connects you with the universal existence. It is simply an internal affair.

JUST GO BY THE LIVING ROAD YOU SEE ON YOUR OWN -- don't ask me and don't ask anyone else what the living road is. Just close your eyes and see for yourself what the living road is. You are alive -- that much is certain; it is proved by your questioning. You are breathing. Just close your eyes and find out where all these branches are joined to the trunk, and where the roots are hidden in the universal energy.

This is the living road, and nobody can point it out to you. You have to find it yourself.

JUST GO BY THE LIVING ROAD YOU SEE ON YOUR OWN; GOING EAST, GOING WEST, LIKE A HAWK SAILING THROUGH THE SKIES. Don't be worried -- wherever it leads, go. Finally it will bring you to the very center of existence.

IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, YOU CROSS OVER TO THE OTHER SIDE. The happening happens only in the blink of an eye. The distance between the buddha and the no-buddha is so small, the distinction between the awake and the asleep is so small, that just in the blink of an eye you have already moved to the further shore, to the other shore.

It is to be understood clearly: the road is not very long. To call it a road is simply symbolic; there is no other way to say it. It is simply a change of vision: you were looking out, you close your eyes and you look within. And you go on, deepening, inside, as far as you can, and you are bound to find the source of your life.

It is just as if a roseflower were trying to find the source of its life. Where is it going to find it? It will have to move withinwards, into the branches, towards the roots, from where it is getting all its nourishment and all its life.

We also have roots, but they are invisible.

Zen is nothing but a discovery of our roots. The man who knows his roots is called the buddha.

ON ANOTHER OCCASION DAIO SAID TO KUSHO: THE CAUSE AND CONDITIONS OF THE ONE GREAT CONCERN OF THE ENLIGHTENED ONES IS NOT APART FROM YOUR DAILY AFFAIRS. THERE IS NO

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HERE AND THERE. IT PERVADES PAST AND PRESENT, SHINING THROUGH THE HEAVENS, MIRRORING THE EARTH. THAT IS WHY IT IS SAID THAT EVERYTHING IN THE LAST MYRIAD EONS IS RIGHT IN THE PRESENT.

The past -- immense past, beginningless past -- is behind you. But where has it gone? An immense future -- eternal future, endless future -- is ahead of you. Where is it hiding? Zen's understanding is that in the present moment the whole past is hidden, and in the present moment the whole future also is hidden. The present moment contains the whole universe -- past, present, future. If you can manage to understand the present moment, you have understood the whole phenomenon of eternity.

Before Albert Einstein, everybody thought that the atom was the smallest particle which existed. Up to Einstein nobody had been able to split the atom, so it was thought to be the last division of matter that we could make. It was impossible to cut the atom in two parts; the atom was a solid entity. But Albert Einstein managed to split the atom, and found that by splitting it, a tremendous energy which is hiding in it explodes.

Nobody had ever conceived that in such a particle, which is not even visible to the eye, so much energy is contained that it can destroy a big city like Hiroshima or Nagasaki within three minutes. It consumed both cities leaving behind only traces, ruins, skeletons....

I have been sent by a friend a picture of a small girl, who must have been going up the stairs to the first floor of her house, carrying her books to do some homework. She was

just half way up the stairs when the atom bomb fell on Hiroshima and everything was burned within three minutes. He has sent me the picture of the girl. She was burned with her books, and her image remained imprinted on the wall -- just the shape of her body, and the small bag in which she was carrying her homework.

Just as the atom was once unknown... and now we have gone hundreds of years ahead of Albert Einstein. Now we are able not only to divide the atom, we can divide the divisions of the atom. Those divisions of the atom carry even bigger power sources, condensed.

The same is true about the moment of time. It contains all past and all future... and of course, the present.

So the man who is meditating forgets all the past, drops all longings for the future. It is enough to know the present. By knowing it, by entering into its complexities, you will know the whole universe. And when you reach to your life source... that too is atomic, an individual life source. But it has to be connected with the universe in some way; otherwise you cannot live. So once you find your life source, you have found the way. Just in the blink of an eye, you are on the other shore. You have entered into the universal existence.

Zen is perhaps the only scientific approach to religious experience.

WE VALUE THE GREAT SPIRIT OF A HERO ONLY IN THOSE CONCERNED. BEFORE ANY SIGNS BECOME DISTINCT, BEFORE ANY ILLUSTRATION IS EVIDENT, CONCENTRATE FIERCELY, LOOKING, LOOKING, COMING OR GOING, TILL YOUR EFFORT IS COMPLETELY RIPE.

All is hidden in the looking, in the watching; in seeing so fiercely that your whole energy is concentrated. Then existence cannot remain a mystery to you. In that concentration you become ripe, and you deserve that all the mysteries be open to you. IN THE MOMENT OF A THOUGHT YOU ATTAIN UNION -- just in a moment. Once you have reached your life source, then it is only a question of a moment, the blink of an eye, and you have found the union with existence.

THE MIND OF BIRTH AND DEATH IS DESTROYED AND SUDDENLY YOU CLEARLY SEE YOUR ORIGINAL APPEARANCE, THE SCENE OF YOUR NATIVE LAND; EACH PARTICULAR DISTINCTLY CLEAR. YOU THEN SEE AND HEAR JUST AS THE BUDDHAS DID, KNOW AND ACT AS THE ENLIGHTENED ANCESTORS DID.

Knowing the source of your life, and taking a quantum leap in the blink of an eye to the other shore, is the union with the whole, the cosmos. After this union you behave like a buddha. You cannot do otherwise. Your actions, your gestures, your words or your silences, your movement or your no-movement, will have the same quality as that of any buddha. All buddhas participate in the same cosmic source.

Zen is not in search of any God. Its search can be said to be union -- the union with the whole. And the union makes you all that is, has been, will be. Nothing is left out of the whole, and you become one with it.

The first missionaries who had come to Japan to convert people to Christianity were amazed by the Zen masters. When they came across a Zen master... because others had

told them, "Don't bother us. You just transform a certain Zen master whom I have loved, and if he changes to Christianity, even if he goes to hell I am ready to go with him. But don't bother with me. You just change that Zen master." And the missionaries approached the Zen masters with their gospels. The Zen masters laughed; they said, "You don't understand religion at all and you are converting people into religion. You don't have the taste yourself."

One missionary was very angry. He opened the Bible and read the Sermon on the Mount. It is a beautiful sermon and he was thinking, "Now, let us see what this fellow says." After three or four lines the Zen master said, "Shut up! I can say only this much, that this guy, whoever has written these lines, will become a buddha sometime in the future. He is on the path. This much I can certainly say, that some day he will become a buddha. But don't take it seriously, because you will also become a buddha one day. And remember, for becoming a buddha, Buddhism is not necessary."

That was the great approach, that for becoming a buddha, Buddhism is not necessary. Nothing is necessary; the buddha is already asleep in you, just some situation is needed in which he can be awakened. All Zen monasteries were doing only one thing -- creating situations so that the buddha is awake. It is not something to which you are converted, it is your own nature.

The Christian missionaries were at a loss, because these Zen masters never talked about God. They said, "What is the point? You don't even know yourself and you are talking about God. Who has seen God? And what will you do even if you meet him?" It will be a very awkward

situation. God standing before you... you will find yourself in a very weird space -- what to do now?

I have told you the story of Rabindranath Tagore. In one of his best poems he wrote, "I have seen God many times but he was always far away beside a star. I followed but by the time I reached there he had moved to some other place, far away. It had been going on and on for many lives. Finally I reached the place, the house where it was written on the door: Here lives the Lord of the World, Father God."

He was just going to knock and became suddenly aware: "Just think twice -- what am I going to do if I meet him? I am not prepared at all. After meeting him there is nothing to do. Your whole life has been structured in searching for God. You know how to search, you know how to fast, you know how to pray, but you don't know.... When you have met God, there is no point in fasting and there is no point in searching and there is no point in prayer. What are you going to do? You will be suffocated!"

Seeing the situation, he took his shoes in his hands, out of fear that when he went back down the steps God might hear the sound of the shoes. He might open the door and say, "Where are you going?" And then he ran away as fast as he could.

The poem has a tremendous beauty. It says, "Since then I am again searching. I know where God is, so I avoid only that place! But I go on searching because in searching there is so much joy, and I am thought to be a great saint. I am enjoying the great adventure of searching for God. There is only one thing I have to remember -- not to go to that place again! But the whole world is available to search, except that house."

Zen has never bothered about God; neither has it said anything against God. That is a very strange situation to understand, because people either believe in God or not. But Zen is simply unconcerned. There is no question of belief or disbelief; it simply puts God out of the way. It is unnecessary luggage.
Zen has taken only the essential point, and that is the source of your life. Just go deepening on that road so that you can reach the final transformation, from the individual to the universal.

Just before his death Basui turned to the crowd that had gathered around and said in a loud voice:
LOOK STRAIGHT AHEAD.
WHAT IS THERE?
IF YOU SEE IT AS IT IS
YOU WILL NEVER ERR.

He is talking about inside. These are his last words; he is saying, "Look straight forward!" He is not telling anybody, he is simply saying it to himself, LOOK STRAIGHT AHEAD. WHAT IS THERE? -- just a pure clarity, a silent sky, an eternal silence. If you see it as it is, without any preconceived ideas, without any religions and philosophies -- just as it is -- you will never err. You will never make a mistake. You will reach directly like an arrow, and hit the moon.
Zen's concern is absolutely you -- you in your original nature.

Question 1

Maneesha has asked:
OUR BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT BECAUSE YOU SPEAK FROM YOUR OWN FUNDAMENTAL EXPERIENCE THAT YOUR WORDS SPONTANEOUSLY IMPRESS ONE AS TRUE, AS UNEQUIVOCAL COMMON SENSE, EVEN THOUGH THE LISTENER MAY NOT HAVE HAD SUCH EXPERIENCE?
FROM THE FIRST SENTENCE OF YOURS THAT I EVER READ -- BEFORE I COULD HAVE DEVELOPED THE EYES AND EARS OF LOVE -- THERE WAS NO DECISION TO CHOOSE TO ACCEPT THAT YOU WERE RIGHT. YOU SIMPLY WERE -- WHETHER IT SUITED ME OR NOT. I JUST DON'T GET IT: HOW IS IT THAT OTHERS COULD POSSIBLY FEEL OTHERWISE?

Maneesha, you can speak on the authority of others, but then your words are dead corpses, like the dry roses you can find in Holy Bibles. But when someone speaks from his own experience it is a living phenomenon. You may agree with it, you may not agree, but it leaves the impact on you that you have been in contact with someone who knows.
I am not authoritarian, but I am an authority. And you have to understand the difference between the two. The authoritarian is always within quotation marks. He is a great scholar, you cannot dispute him. His argument is very valid, supported by the scriptures. His authoritarian attitude is derived from scriptures, from the past, from others' experiences.

I am not authoritarian but certainly I am the authority. I say only that which I know. And because I say only that which I know, you may agree with it or not, it does not matter; its truth rings a bell in your heart. And whenever something rings a bell in your heart, don't listen to the mind -- the mind may not agree. Listen to the heart because the heart knows better.

The heart is ancient; the mind is a very recent development. And the mind's development is from outside experiences. The heart knows something of the inner, it knows nothing of the outer. So when your heart rings a bell, whether your mind agrees with it or not, don't be worried; you are very close to the truth.

If any person's presence simply overwhelms you ... that is the only intimate communion between a disciple and a master. That is the only way the disciple can decide that he has found his master. He is overwhelmed, he is surrounded by the master's presence from all sides. The mind may be freaking out, because mind is always afraid of being overwhelmed by someone. The mind is basically egoistic and to be overwhelmed means the ego may be gone like a shadow. Mind is afraid of truth, mind is afraid of reality, because mind consists of all kinds of illusions, lies. Truth will expose it; hence it avoids the truth.

But you are fortunate, Maneesha. If your heart says that you have found a man who is speaking on his own authority, then a revolution is possible in your very life, too. And that revolution is happening day by day, it is not something that stops. It goes on happening until you are completely burned and dissolved.

That fortunate moment will also come. It is not very far. This is a good beginning.

Before you enter into the living way, inwards, don't forget to come back again. I am always afraid for Sardar Gurudayal Singh. I have even ordered a grave to be made ready, because some day somebody may not come back. And Sardar Gurudayal Singh is standing in the queue almost at the front, very close. He will laugh and simply go away. We will celebrate... and he knows that there is no need to be worried. But he goes on coming back, because one never knows what joke I am going to tell.
I will miss him also, because he is the only man in the whole world who laughs before the joke is told. Such trust is very difficult to find. But I warn you all: go deep, but don't go too far. When Nivedano gives the call to come back, be a good boy!

Jesus and Peter are sipping their iced tea while sunbathing on the shore of Lake Galilee.
A group of children nearby start throwing rocks in the water. They laugh and shout and kick up the sand.
His peace completely destroyed, Peter sits up. "Hey! You kids!" he barks at them. "You get outta here!"
But Jesus pushes up his Ray-Ban sunglasses, wipes the sand off his face, and says, "No, Peter. Let the children come unto me."
Five minutes later, the noise is deafening as screaming kids, splashing water, and flying sand fill the air. Peter, hung over from last night's wine, gets totally pissed off. "I said, you kids just get the hell outta here!" he screams.

But again Jesus sits up, wipes the sand off himself, raises his hand and says, "Peter, I told you: let the children come unto me -- so that I can kick their little asses!"

Klopski is sitting with Seamus at the Dancing Duck Pub, sipping his beer.
"Hey, Seamus," says the Polack, "how do you do so well with the girls?"
"Easy," says Seamus. "You have to be sophisticated, and you have to have a gimmick."
"Sophisticated is easy," says Klopski, swallowing down his tenth beer. "But what is a gimmick?"
"Well," replies Seamus, "for example, I painted a white circle on the dashboard of my car. The girl usually asks me what it means. Then I very casually explain that it stands for purity. The conversation generally turns to abstract white things, like virginity. From there it is easy to talk them into it."
"Okay," says Klopski, "I think I got it."
The next evening Klopski paints a white circle on the dashboard of his car, and then goes to pick up his date, Lucy.
"That is rather unusual -- having a white circle on your dash," says Lucy to Klopski.
"Yes, it is," replies Klopski, thinking quickly as he adjusts his tie. "Do you wanna fuck?"

"You are drunk!" shouts the barman of the Groggy Doggie Pub, at Paddy, who just has slipped slowly onto the floor again.

"I'm not drunk at all!" insists Paddy, picking himself up. "In fact, I'm not even drunk a little bit, and I'll prove it to you. Now, you see that cat just coming in the door? Well, it has only got one eye."
"You're drunker than I thought," says the barman. "That cat is going out!"

Nivedano...

Nivedano...

Be silent, close your eyes.
Feel your body to be completely frozen.
Look inwards, straight to the very source of your life.
Go deeper without any fear.
Only this way has anyone found himself as a buddha. This is the only living road that leads you to your cosmic home.
Without hesitation go on, go on.
Gather all the experience of silence, the bliss and the benediction.

To make it more clear, Nivedano...

Relax, watch your mind and body, separate from you.
You are only a watcher.
This point of being a watcher is the buddha.
Recognize your buddha nature; it is just a mirror -- reflecting everything but unaffected.
Nothing leaves a mark on your watching. The mirror remains empty.

This emptiness can at any moment take a quantum leap,
and you will find yourself on the other shore.
Just in a split second you can be one with the whole.
This union is the authentic goal of religiousness.

A beautiful evening...
Unfortunately, how many are able to enjoy it?
So few, but we have to spread this fire, this cool silence,
just like a breeze around the globe.
This silence is going to become the womb for the new man
to be born.
You prepare the way.

Nivedano...

Come back.
But come back like buddhas, with great dignity, with grace,
with silence.
Sit for a few moments, just gathering, remembering,
collecting the experience of your silent moments.

You have to remain a buddha twenty-four hours.
It is not an action, it is your nature.
It has to be expressed in all your actions, in your words, in
your silences, in your songs, in your dances.
But you remain the watcher, the buddha.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Can we celebrate all the buddhas?

Yes!

## The Buddha: The Emptiness of the Heart

### Chapter #6

Chapter title: To take up a koan
13 September 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
BUKKO SAID:
AT THE BEGINNING YOU HAVE TO TAKE UP A KOAN.
THE KOAN IS SOME DEEP SAYING OF A PATRIARCH. ITS EFFECT IN THIS WORLD OF DISTINCTIONS IS TO MAKE A MAN'S GAZE STRAIGHT, AND TO GIVE HIM STRENGTH AS HE STANDS ON THE BRINK OF THE RIVER BANK.
FOR THE PAST TWO OR THREE YEARS, I HAVE BEEN GIVING, IN MY INTERVIEWS, THREE KOANS: "THE TRUE FACE BEFORE FATHER AND MOTHER WERE BORN," "THE HEART, THE BUDDHA," AND "NO HEART, NO BUDDHA." FOR ONE FACING THE TURBULENCE OF LIFE-AND-DEATH, THESE KOANS CLEAR AWAY THE SANDY SOIL OF WORLDLY CONCERNS AND OPEN UP THE GOLDEN TREASURE WHICH WAS THERE FROM THE BEGINNING, THE AGELESS ROOT OF ALL THINGS.
HOWEVER, IF AFTER GRAPPLING WITH A KOAN FOR THREE OR FIVE YEARS, THERE IS STILL NO SATORI, THEN THE KOAN SHOULD BE DROPPED;

OTHERWISE IT MAY BECOME AN INVISIBLE CHAIN ROUND ONE. EVEN THESE TRADITIONAL METHODS CAN BECOME A MEDICINE WHICH POISONS.

IN GENERAL, MEDITATION HAS TO BE DONE WITH URGENCY, BUT IF, AFTER THREE OR FIVE YEARS THE URGENCY IS STILL MAINTAINED FORCIBLY, THE TENSION BECOMES A WRONG ONE AND IT IS A SERIOUS CONDITION. MANY LOSE HEART AND GIVE UP AS A RESULT.

AN ANCIENT HAS SAID, "SOMETIMES QUICKLY AND SOMETIMES SLOWLY, SOMETIMES HOT ON THE TRAIL AND SOMETIMES RESTING AT A DISTANCE."

BUKKO CONTINUED:

SO THIS MOUNTAIN PRIEST NOW MAKES PEOPLE AT THIS STAGE THROW DOWN THEIR KOAN. WHEN IT IS DROPPED AND THERE IS A COOLING DOWN, IN DUE TIME THEY HIT ON WHAT THEIR OWN TRUE NATURE IS, AS THE SOLUTION OF THE KOAN.

IN CONCENTRATION ON A KOAN, THERE IS A TIME OF ROUSING THE SPIRIT OF INQUIRY, THERE IS A TIME OF BREAKING THE CLINGING ATTACHMENTS, THERE IS A TIME OF FURIOUS DASHING FORWARD, AND THERE IS A TIME OF DAMPING THE FUEL AND STOPPING THE BOILING.

SINCE COMING TO JAPAN, THIS MOUNTAIN PRIEST HAS BEEN MAKING THE PUPILS LOOK INTO A KOAN, BUT WHEN THEY HAVE DONE THIS FOR A GOOD TIME, HE TELLS THEM TO THROW IT

DOWN. THE POINT IS THAT MANY PEOPLE COME TO SUCCESS IF THEY FIRST HAVE THE EXPERIENCE OF WRESTLING WITH A KOAN AND LATER REDUCE THE EFFORT; BUT FEW COME TO SUCCESS AT THE TIME WHEN THEY ARE PUTTING OUT EXCEPTIONAL EFFORT.

SO THE INSTRUCTION IS THAT THOSE WHO HAVE NOT YET LOOKED INTO A KOAN ABSOLUTELY MUST DO SO, BUT THOSE WHO HAVE HAD ONE FOR A GOOD TIME MUST THROW IT DOWN. AT THE TIME OF ZAZEN THEY THROW IT ALL AWAY. THEY SLEEP WHEN IT IS TIME TO SLEEP, GO WHEN IT IS TIME TO GO, SIT WHEN IT IS TIME TO SIT, AND SO ON, AS IF THEY WERE NOT DOING ZEN AT ALL.

Maneesha, before I discuss what Bukko is saying, I have to introduce you to the word koan.

It is something like a puzzle that cannot be solved -- basically insoluble. For example, how you looked before you were born -- there is no way to solve the problem, there is nowhere to find the answer. Or the koan -- the most famous one -- the sound of one hand clapping. Now, one hand cannot clap; for clapping the other hand will be needed.

So first you have to understand the meaning of koan. It is some kind of statement which has no answer anywhere, and the master gives it to the disciple to meditate on and find the answer. From the very beginning the disciple knows, and the master knows, there is no possible way to find the answer. But it is a great strategy: when the mind cannot find the answer -- and the meditation has to be very urgent,

with total energy focused on the koan -- the mind feels almost impotent. It looks here and there, brings out this answer, that answer, and gets hits from the master for bringing a wrong answer.

Every answer is wrong, because the very function of the koan is not to get the answer; the very function of the koan is to tire your mind to such a point that it gives up. If there were an answer, the mind would find it. It does not matter whether you are very intelligent, or not very intelligent -- no intelligence of any category can find the answer.

But naturally, mind tries and tries. And the disciple comes every morning to see the master, to tell him what he has found in the twenty-four hours. In the beginning, the disciples think perhaps they may be able to make it out....

A disciple was given the koan of one hand clapping. He heard the sound of the wind passing through the pine trees, and he thought, "Perhaps this is the sound of one hand clapping." He rushed to give the answer to the master, but before he could even open his mouth he was beaten.

He said, "This is too much! I have not said anything."

The master said, "It does not matter whether you have said anything or not -- you were going to say something."

The student said, "But at least you should have heard it first..."

The master said, "It does not matter, whatever you say is going to be wrong. Just go and meditate!"

When disciples become accustomed, they don't rush to the master with answers. They know there is no answer. Knowing that there is no answer, mind gives up. And the whole strategy is very subtle, to put the mind aside; tired, exhausted, it has no desire to function anymore.

The moment you put the mind aside, you have entered into the world of meditation. It has nothing to do with the koan, but the koan helped to tire the mind.

Bukko is a very practical master; most of the Zen masters are not so practical. They speak from their peaks of consciousness; Bukko is speaking from the same ground as where you are. Hence, he is of much more help than the great masters who speak from a faraway peak of consciousness. Bukko knows that even if they shout they will not be understood; it is better to come down to the dark valley and talk to people in such a way that they can somehow get the point, that mind is of no use in the internal journey. That is the point: that mind is a hindrance, not a help; a wall, not a bridge.

And Bukko is very compassionate in going into the details -- no other master has gone into the details -- and even giving warnings that the method is not a hundred percent foolproof. No device can be; even the method itself can become a hindrance.

AT THE BEGINNING YOU HAVE TO TAKE UP A KOAN, says Bukko. THE KOAN IS SOME DEEP SAYING OF A PATRIARCH. ITS EFFECT IN THIS WORLD OF DISTINCTIONS IS TO MAKE A MAN'S GAZE STRAIGHT, AND TO GIVE HIM STRENGTH AS HE STANDS ON THE BRINK OF THE RIVER BANK.

Your mind is very wavering, wobbly. A koan concentrates all your energies. A koan has not to be done in a lukewarm way, that is dangerous. It has to be done with totality, so you can exhaust the mind quickly -- as quickly as possible. Zen masters have experienced that the longest period is three years -- if you cannot get tired in three years that

means you are not putting your total energy into it. You are saving energy, you are not going really hot. If you go really hot, then in a single moment you can see straight: there is no answer. And with the very experience that there is no answer at all, mind drops by the side. You have entered the space of your being.

But if you go on doing it so-so, the danger is that after three years... if you have not got it yet, then it is better to drop the koan. It is not going to help, it is now going to hamper and hinder. It has become just a habit. Sitting silently, and just by the way, with many other thoughts coming and going, one thought is also there: What is the sound of one hand clapping? But you are not totally concentrated so that only the koan is there and nothing else.

Bukko says, THE KOAN IS SOME DEEP SAYING OF A PATRIARCH. ITS EFFECT IN THIS WORLD OF DISTINCTIONS IS TO MAKE A MAN'S GAZE STRAIGHT... to put his whole energy straight on a single point; to make his consciousness like an arrow -- not going in all directions, a part here and a part there, a part in the past and a part in the future, and you are doing the koan with whatever small bit is left which has not gone anywhere. This way you will never come to the end; on the contrary, this will become your habit. You will do the koan your whole life, it will never bring meditation to you.

So if within three years a koan has not dropped by itself, with the mind, and you don't enter into being, into the silence of being where there is no question and no answer -- then please stop the koan. Don't let it become a habit; don't let it become a mental conditioning.

The first thing is to make your gaze straight, and to give you strength as you stand on the brink of the river bank.
FOR THE PAST TWO OR THREE YEARS, I HAVE BEEN GIVING, IN MY INTERVIEWS, THREE KOANS: "THE TRUE FACE BEFORE FATHER AND MOTHER WERE BORN...."
Not only you, but before your father and mother were born -- your true face. There is no way to find where you were, what your true face was....
Second, "THE HEART, THE BUDDHA." Find the heart which is the buddha.
And the third, "NO HEART, NO BUDDHA." These three koans he has used. There are a thousand and one koans -- anything which is insoluble, which looks beautiful but when you start working on it, you find that you have come to the end of the road; it does not go anywhere.
FOR ONE FACING THE TURBULENCE OF LIFE-AND-DEATH, THESE KOANS CLEAR AWAY THE SANDY SOIL OF WORLDLY CONCERNS AND OPEN UP THE GOLDEN TREASURE WHICH WAS THERE FROM THE BEGINNING, THE AGELESS ROOT OF ALL THINGS.
The koan can do a miracle, although it is just a device. The question is with what urgency, with what totality, you make your whole mind concerned only with the koan, twenty-four hours. It is not something that you do for one hour and forget about it.
It is a monastery method. Remember, there are methods which are individual and you can do anywhere, and there are methods which are monastery methods; you can do them only in a monastery, where you are allowed to

meditate twenty-four hours, where there is nothing else to do but to meditate.
The koan is a monastery method. If you can put in all your energy, not leaving a small chunk of your consciousness aside, as is the habit of people... They never stake everything. For safety, for an emergency, they keep holding something back. They never put all they have into the method.

I have heard, Mulla Nasruddin was caught traveling without a ticket. The ticket checker was puzzled, because Mulla opened all his suitcases and threw things all over the compartment, and finally, the very effort of his search... He had looked into every pocket except one pocket on the left side of his coat. The ticket checker noticed it and he said, "Your effort proves that certainly you have the ticket, and it has got mixed up because you are carrying so much luggage. So don't be worried, when you get off you can look for it. But one question I have to ask you: You have looked into everything else, why don't you look in your left-side pocket?"
Mulla said, "Don't mention that!"
The man said, "Why? When you are looking, then why are you saving that one pocket?"
He said, "That is my only hope, that perhaps it may be there. If it is not there, then it is certain -- it is nowhere. I cannot drop my hope. First I will have to look through everything."
And he was not only looking into his own suitcases, he started looking into other people's! The ticket checker said, "You stop! These are not your suitcases. Are you a

madman? You are not looking in the pocket where I think the ticket is, and you have started opening other peoples suitcases?"
Mulla said, "I will search first throughout the world; only as a last resort, when everything else is finished, will I check in my left pocket. That is my only hope!"

People always keep something aside, they never put everything, in totality, at the stake. And what they put aside keeps them divided. They cannot be total; they remain only a part involved and a part not involved.
So the first thing the koan does is to make you completely straightforward, pointing to a single goal, like an arrow. If this is done, soon your mind will be tired. But if you are saving some energy, your mind will always rejuvenate itself. The saved energy will never allow you to be so tired and so exhausted that you simply drop the koan, you simply say, "I am fed up; I am finished. This is stupid -- there cannot be any sound with one hand clapping!"
At that exhausted moment, mind stops -- tired, utterly fed up. With the mind stopping, even for a single moment, in the blink of an eye you are on the other shore.
FOR ONE FACING THE TURBULENCE OF LIFE-AND-DEATH, THESE KOANS CLEAR AWAY THE SANDY SOIL OF WORLDLY CONCERNS AND OPEN UP THE GOLDEN TREASURE WHICH WAS THERE FROM THE BEGINNING, THE AGELESS ROOT OF ALL THINGS.
A very simple device, if done rightly, can open up the cosmic treasure -- your ultimate home.

HOWEVER, IF AFTER GRAPPLING WITH A KOAN FOR THREE OR FIVE YEARS, THERE IS STILL NO SATORI, no enlightenment, THEN THE KOAN SHOULD BE DROPPED.

This is what I call a compassionate master. Bukko is very much concerned with the disciple -- not just saying the ultimate truths, but almost trailing along with him by his side, as a fellow traveler, making him aware of every pitfall.

IF, FOR THREE OR FIVE YEARS, THERE IS STILL NO SATORI, THEN THE KOAN SHOULD BE DROPPED; OTHERWISE IT MAY BECOME AN INVISIBLE CHAIN ROUND ONE.

You will have started thinking that this is a kind of mantra, a religious ritual -- every day you do it. Nothing happens, but perhaps sometime you will accumulate enough virtue... But what virtue can you accumulate by thinking about a koan like the sound of one hand clapping?

These are not mantras that you go on repeating all your life; these are absolutely scientific devices. But one has to do it with totality, then it can open the door. If you do it half-heartedly, then please don't do it, because doing it half-heartedly you will never come to the gate. You will go on repeating your nonsense -- because it is nonsense; you have to remember that it is nonsense that you are repeating. There is no sound of one hand clapping, and there is no face that you can find anywhere before your parents were born.

These are not puzzles that you can, with great intelligence, solve. They look like puzzles, but they are not puzzles; they are simply absurdities. But the absurd is capable of tiring

the mind. Only the absurd can tire it -- anything rational, the mind will manage; anything reasonable, the mind will manage; anything logical, the mind will manage. Only something absurd... Mind cannot manage the absurd; it can go nuts but it cannot solve the problem. Before it goes nuts you have to drop the problem.

Remember that either your koan can drive you nuts, if you are doing it half-heartedly, or it can make you a buddha if you are doing it totally, wholeheartedly. The whole question is of urgency and totality.

Before the koan becomes a chain, a bondage, it has to be dropped.

EVEN THESE TRADITIONAL METHODS CAN BECOME A MEDICINE WHICH POISONS.

IN GENERAL, MEDITATION HAS TO BE DONE WITH URGENCY, BUT IF, AFTER THREE OR FIVE YEARS, THE URGENCY IS STILL MAINTAINED FORCIBLY, THE TENSION BECOMES A WRONG ONE AND IT IS A SERIOUS CONDITION.

It can drive you mad. Just think: for five years, day and night, a person is thinking about the sound of one hand clapping. He will go mad! It will become such a psychological condition that he may want to stop it but it will not stop. It will go on and on inside in him, "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" Even in his sleep it will continue. The moment he opens his eyes, the first thought will be, "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" Before going to sleep, the last thought will be, "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" And the same will continue through the whole night like an undercurrent.

Bukko is making it clear: "Remember that even medicine can become poison. It can become out of date; you should not use it beyond its limit." And if you want to do it within its limits, then do it so totally that you are finished before the time limit on the medicine is finished.

On every bottle of medicine, there is a date, a last date beyond which you should not use it. On every device there is a time limit, and if you want to experience the eternal in you, then don't go slowly; then be fast, before the time limit on the device is finished.

And always remember that it is a nonsense device, there is no answer for it. It is not meant to have an answer; its purpose is there, and the purpose is to exhaust your mind. So put in your total energy, so it is exhausted quickly. The quicker you exhaust the mind, the sooner the realization, the transcendence, the opening of the doors of your eternal treasures.

IN GENERAL, MEDITATION HAS TO BE DONE WITH URGENCY, BUT IF, AFTER THREE OR FIVE YEARS, THE URGENCY IS STILL MAINTAINED FORCIBLY, THE TENSION BECOMES A WRONG ONE AND IT IS A SERIOUS CONDITION. MANY LOSE HEART AND GIVE UP AS A RESULT.

AN ANCIENT HAS SAID, "SOMETIMES QUICKLY AND SOMETIMES SLOWLY, SOMETIMES HOT ON THE TRAIL AND SOMETIMES RESTING AT A DISTANCE."

BUKKO CONTINUED:

SO THIS MOUNTAIN PRIEST NOW MAKES PEOPLE AT THIS STAGE THROW DOWN THEIR KOAN.

WHEN IT IS DROPPED AND THERE IS A COOLING DOWN...

because you were going with full speed, your mind was becoming hotter and hotter, on a single point for years. Bukko says, "I tell my disciples, now it is time to drop it, and let the mind cool down."

... THERE IS A COOLING DOWN, IN DUE TIME THEY HIT ON WHAT THEIR OWN TRUE NATURE IS, AS THE SOLUTION OF THE KOAN.

When the mind cools down, that is almost the equivalent of mind being put aside. In one case it is sudden enlightenment, in the other case it will be called gradual enlightenment.

I don't use koans for the simple reason that you are not in a monastery. The method is basically a monastery method -- nobody has made the distinction before. My people are in the world; they cannot put their totality into meditating twenty-four hours. It is enough for them to put their totality into it for a few minutes and just have a drink of their eternity, of their immortality, just to have a glimpse of the roots. And don't continue it, just let it remain like a faraway echo surrounding you. A fragrance -- just as when you pass a rose garden, even if you don't touch the roses, your clothes will carry the fragrance of the roses.

You are in the world, and I want everyone of my sannyasins to be in the world. I don't want you to be in a monastery, because a monastery takes all your twenty-four hours, destroys all your capabilities for creativity. And most often people become so tired that they leave the monastery and enter another monastery. This is a constant phenomenon in Japan: people who get tired of one

monastery move into another monastery. And because they don't have to work at anything -- food is supplied by the monastery, clothes are supplied by the monastery; their only work is to concentrate on the koan -- either they become fed up with the monastery and they think something is wrong with the koan because nothing is happening and three years have passed, or they go nuts. Their urgency and totality takes a wrong turn and they go mad.

This happens constantly in Zen monasteries. In fact, every Zen monastery has a special retreat place for monks who go mad. But their method to bring the mad monk back into the world is very simple. Modern psychiatry and psychology should study the method because what they cannot do in ten years time is done within three weeks in the monasteries. And in fact, nothing is done; just in the monastery, in a faraway place in the bamboos, hidden by the side of a river, is a small cottage. The man is left alone there, and is told not to talk to anybody. Anyway, nobody passes by there except the man who brings the food every day. But he is not allowed to talk to the man; neither is the man allowed even to make gestures or to say hello.

Three weeks sitting silently, nobody to talk to, nothing to do... the mind cools down.

What psychoanalysis cannot do in fifteen years, the Zen monastery has been doing for one thousand years for thousands of monks.

Nobody goes to visit for those three weeks; the man is just left alone. At first he talks to himself; then slowly slowly the heat goes away, he cools down. A beautiful scene: the flowers, the bamboos, and the river; and no other man

around. And as he cools down, he is brought back to the monastery.

But in any case, one should not do a method in such a way that it drives you mad. And the reason why people go mad through certain methods is that they are trying to be clever. They keep a certain amount of energy on the side -- in the left pocket! -- so they are never total. And unless they are total, the mind cannot be put aside. So totality is really the function, the purpose of a koan.

I am not using it, and I will not tell anybody else to use it unless he is part of a monastery where he has no mundane work to do, where he is completely dependent on the society. But when you are dependent on the society, you cannot be rebellious. That's why Zen masters have achieved buddhahood but their buddhahood is not a rebellion; it is not a revolution.

I want my buddhas to be rebellions. But you can be a rebel only if you don't depend on the society. If you are independent in your working, in your earning, you can be rebellious against all orthodoxies.

It is very cunning, but perhaps without any intention, that rich people, emperors, all donate to the monasteries. It is very good for them: they are earning spiritual virtue, opening a bank account in heaven. And on the other end, they are keeping those people from ever becoming rebellious. They have crippled them completely; they have forgotten how to do anything. They are not asked to do anything but just sit and meditate on the koan -- which is an absurdity.

It is by chance -- and I will say only by chance -- that someone becomes enlightened through a koan, because one

has to keep repeating it for at least two or three years, constantly involved in it.
Remember the difference, that going out of the mind is not going beyond mind. Going out of the mind is very easy. Many people go mad without any koans, but perhaps they have also a certain koan of their own. Maybe it is money, maybe it is a woman or a man. They drive themselves mad, continuously thinking about it.
I know a man who drove himself mad because of money. He was so much in love with money that it was almost impossible to believe it. If you had a hundred-rupee note in your hand, it is yours but he would touch it, just to feel it. And you could even see his saliva coming out!
I became friendly with the fellow, so he used to come to my place and I would give him a few notes just to play with. He would be so happy. Finally I heard that he had been forced into a madhouse, because it became a difficult situation. He started stealing, he started borrowing and would never repay, so the whole city became aware. And he would never purchase anything because he would have to give up the money.
Money was his god -- it is many people's god, it is their koan. It is also just like a koan, insoluble: however much you have, your desire is always for more. It is insoluble. Even the richest man in the world is not satisfied with his riches, he wants more.

IN CONCENTRATION ON A KOAN, THERE IS A TIME OF ROUSING THE SPIRIT OF INQUIRY, THERE IS A TIME OF BREAKING THE CLINGING ATTACHMENTS, THERE IS A TIME OF FURIOUS

DASHING FORWARD, AND THERE IS A TIME OF DAMPING THE FUEL AND STOPPING THE BOILING. SINCE COMING TO JAPAN, THIS MOUNTAIN PRIEST HAS BEEN MAKING THE PUPILS LOOK INTO A KOAN, BUT WHEN THEY HAVE DONE THIS FOR A GOOD TIME, HE TELLS THEM TO THROW IT DOWN. THE POINT IS THAT MANY PEOPLE COME TO SUCCESS IF THEY FIRST HAVE THE EXPERIENCE OF WRESTLING WITH A KOAN AND LATER REDUCE THE EFFORT...

That's why I say Bukko is a very practical and pragmatic teacher. He is not like a Bodhidharma, a sword -- in one blow your head is gone. He is more businesslike. He says that even if you have not attained satori, enlightenment, it helps just to get hot. If it is not enough to evaporate, he starts telling you, "Cool down, drop it." His experience is that even this little bit of heating up, and then cooling down, gives a certain space, a gap, a comparison between the two states. And through that gate, through that small acquaintance with the difference between the heated mind and the cool mind, a person may come to success rather than at the time when he was putting out exceptional effort. But this is, in my understanding, a very businesslike approach. Perhaps somebody may have attained enlightenment in this way, but I will not say that this is a principle; it can only be an accident.

I don't use koans at all, because my people are to put their totality into meditation for five minutes, and that's enough. Then just the remembrance of it will transform their lives. And going inwards just for a few minutes has never driven anyone mad. You can go as deep as possible, with your

totality, because you know Nivedano is sitting there and he won't allow you to go beyond the limit. Just as you are coming close to the limit, where you can lose your mind, Nivedano's drum immediately calls you back.

We are not to lose the mind; we have to go beyond the mind, and use the mind from the space of being beyond. Mind is a good mechanism; we are not against the mind. We simply don't want the mind to be dominant, to be the master. We want our consciousness to be the master and mind only a functionary, a servant.

Bukko says, SO THE INSTRUCTION IS THAT THOSE WHO HAVE NOT YET LOOKED INTO A KOAN ABSOLUTELY MUST DO SO, BUT THOSE WHO HAVE HAD ONE FOR A GOOD TIME MUST THROW IT DOWN. AT THE TIME OF ZAZEN THEY THROW IT ALL AWAY. THEY SLEEP WHEN IT IS TIME TO SLEEP, GO WHEN IT IS TIME TO GO, SIT WHEN IT IS TIME TO SIT, AND SO ON, AS IF THEY WERE NOT DOING ZEN AT ALL.

This part in itself is beautiful. This part can be of immense help to you. While you are doing your meditations, do them totally. Forget the whole world, as if for those few minutes there is no world; only you and this space that you are running towards with the speed of light, like an arrow, to hit some unknown center of your being.

And just gather the experience, the joy, the blissfulness, and come back. Come back with your buddhahood as a fragrance around you. And then watch -- in your day-to-day life, working, all kinds of things -- just out of the corner of your eye, remember. You may be chopping wood, or

carrying water from the well -- you are a buddha. Although nobody has seen Gautam Buddha chopping wood and carrying water from the well -- so many disciples loved him that they managed to chop the wood for him and carry the water from the well.

Before you gather a few buddhas around you, you have to chop the wood and you have to carry the water. But don't forget that you are a buddha. It is a good opportunity, before other buddhas start chopping your wood!

This last statement is beautiful:

Be a buddha, but don't be an exhibitionist. Don't try to convince others that you are a buddha -- that's what mad people do. It is enough that you know you are a buddha. You don't have to convince the neighbors that you are really a buddha.

I used to go to madhouses....

One of my friends was the governor of one of the states, so he allowed me -- I could visit any madhouse in the state, or any jail, wherever I wanted to go. Otherwise, it is very difficult to see mad people.

You cannot change their opinion, whatever opinion they have. If they think that they are a railway train, they will go by your side making the noise of the train. They will not bother that you are standing there... they are going somewhere. They are a train and you cannot convince them otherwise.

I asked a madman who was going like this, "Do you have any passengers?"

He said, "I am just an engine and I'm shunting. I am not going anywhere, just shunting from this room to that room. I am only an engine, I don't care about passengers!"

And he was so serious. I said, "It would be good to connect a train with you."
He said, "I don't like the idea. Why should I bother with any passengers and trains? I am enjoying myself perfectly." And he went on.
The superintendent said, "We have tried. It doesn't work -- nothing works."
You cannot change the mind of a madman. And I am making this statement for a particular reason: don't have such a mind, which cannot be changed. That's what fundamentalists have -- fundamentalist Christians like Ronald Reagan. You cannot change their minds, and that is a sign of madness. An intelligent man is always available to change, if a better argument is given to him. You cannot change the fundamentalist; he has decided, and decided for eternity.
There is no way to convince even Jesus that "You are not the son of God." Thousands of people tried it: "Listen, don't make unnecessary fuss! And you look like a clown, sitting on a donkey, followed by a few idiots and claiming that you are the only begotten son of God. You are a humiliation to our religion!"
The Jews were trying hard to convince him -- "You are just a carpenter, remember? Your father is Joseph and your mother is Mary, remember?"
But a fundamentalist....
In a crowd, Jesus was speaking and somebody said, "Your mother is standing outside." And it hurts what he said; he said, "Tell that woman that I don't have any relatives here! My father is in heaven."

Now telling that poor woman -- she had not seen him for years, because for years he had been wandering in Kashmir, in Ladakh, in Tibet. In the Bible there is no account about what happened for seventeen years of his life. And he lived only thirty-three years; only three years, the last three years, are depicted. What happened to the seventeen years before? One mention of the time when he was thirteen is there, and after that there is a big gap.

The mother had not seen him for so long, naturally the poor old woman... And he insulted her, he did not even give her an appointment. He is no ordinary man, these relatives drag him down to humanity. He is a son of God, he is divine, he is not human.

You cannot change the mind of a fundamentalist. And to me, the fundamentalist is equivalent to the madman. A reasonable man, an intelligent man, is never fundamentalist. He is always ready and available to change anything if he can find a better argument, a better idea, a better solution. He is flexible, he is not adamant and stubborn. He is ready to bend, to change, to transform.

I want you never to be a fundamentalist. Always remain vulnerable. To be vulnerable to existence is the most beautiful experience.

But for that, you need some acquaintance with existence -- from your inner being, not from outside. You know the stars from the outside, but you have not known the universe from your inside. From your very roots you have to come in contact, and that contact will be your liberation. That contact will make you a buddha.

You are a buddha; just a little dust has gathered on the mirror.

I am reminded of Michelangelo.... He passed through the market where marble shops were. And he was a sculptor, perhaps the best the world has known. He saw in front of a shop, on the other side of the road, a big marble rock. He asked, "How much will it cost?"
The owner said, "It will not cost anything, because for ten years it has been lying there and I have not found anybody to be interested in it. If you want it you can take it -- I need more space for other rocks and that rock is taking too much space. But I don't think anybody can make anything out of it. It is a strange rock, the shape is strange."
So Michelangelo took that rock, and after two years working on it he created the world's most famous statue of Jesus -- he has just been brought down from the cross and Mary, his mother, is holding him in her lap. The statue is of the cross and Jesus and the mother, and life size. Michelangelo was certainly one of the greatest men as far as sculpture is concerned. Jesus looks as if he is just going to come back to life -- so alive. You can see every muscle of the man, you can see the holes which the nails have made in his hands....

Just a few years ago, a madman destroyed that statue. Nobody ever thought that anybody would destroy such a beautiful statue -- it was in the Vatican. And in front of the court the madman said, "I had to destroy it because I want to be as famous as Michelangelo. Now my name will always be remembered along with Michelangelo: he made it, I destroyed it."
But when the statue was ready, Michelangelo invited the shop owner to see what had happened to the rock. The shop

owner could not believe his eyes. He said, "You have done a miracle! How have you managed?"
Michelangelo said, "No, I have not managed anything. Just as I was passing down the road, I heard the rock saying, `Hidden in me are Jesus and Mary. You just have to take out a few chunks here and there, and Jesus and Mary will reveal themselves.' I have not created Jesus or Mary, I have simply removed the unnecessary marble and left only what is needed to make Jesus and Mary and the cross."
This is really the experience of a meditator. As you go deeper you hear... not in words, but something more like a magnetic pull, towards a buddha which is hidden inside you at the very source. And once you have touched those roots, once you have known your buddhahood just for five minutes, it is enough to be able to remember it twenty-four hours. Slowly slowly it will change your whole life into a beauty, a grace, a tremendous ecstasy.
You don't have to do meditation twenty-four hours. I am against monasteries and monks because they are an absolutely unnecessary load on the society. And particularly in the East, where there is so much poverty, these monks are heavy on the whole economy.

In Thailand, just two years ago, they had to pass a law in the parliament that nobody can become a monk without getting a license from the government. Because one person out of every four was a monk. The other three had to supply everything to the monk. It was a tradition that every family should give one son, particularly the eldest son, to the religion, to the church. They were one fourth of the population; the whole population is poor, and these

vagabonds, thinking that they were doing something spiritual, were just being parasites.

I don't want anybody to be a monk, I want you to be in the world. Meditation need not to be done twenty-four hours; meditation is just a small glimpse -- and then carry out your work. Slowly slowly that glimpse will start radiating in your actions, in your silences, in your songs, in your dances.

There is no need to waste twenty-four hours and become a parasite. And when you become a parasite on the society, you cannot rebel against the society. You cannot say a single thing against any superstition.

My people can be sannyasins and yet absolutely rebellious, because they are not dependent on anyone. Their meditation is their own personal affair.

Why are all the religions against me? Because I am introducing a new kind of sannyasin in the world; and the fear is that if this fire catches hold, like a wildfire, then sannyasins will be the most rebellious people in the world. They will destroy all superstitions and all stupidities, and they will not agree to anything that goes against their consciousness.

This is the reason that twenty-one countries have decided in their parliaments that I am a dangerous man. And strangely enough, not a single man in those parliaments has asked, "What do you mean by dangerous?" Everybody understands, it seems, that the danger is in giving individuality to religion, is in giving rebelliousness to individuals. And no vested interest wants it. They are ready for monks, they are ready to give donations to monasteries, but they are really afraid of people who are buddhas and

rebellious at the same time. And to me, a buddha who is not rebellious is not much of a buddha. He is just a rotten piece!

A poet wrote:
IN THE EVENING
IF IT WERE RAIN
WE SHOULD SEEK SHELTER,
BUT THINKING, "IT IS ONLY MIST"
WE GO ON AND BECOME DRENCHED.

He is not talking about the rain outside, he is talking about your inside. Don't be afraid -- get drenched in the mist, in the mystery. And when you come back, come back a totally different person. The one who has gone in should be left behind, and you should take a new face -- your original face.
Dropping the mask and bringing out your original face is the whole alchemy of meditation.

An old man for the first time had come to a big city, and he was standing amazed, looking at the high skyscrapers. And then he saw an old woman, a very old woman, entering into a cabin. He did not understand that it was an elevator. He watched to see what happened, and when the elevator came down, a young woman came out.
He said, "My god! If I had known, I would have brought my old woman with me. This is great science!"
But exactly this happens. When you go in, you are an old mask; when you come back, come back as a fresh, original face. This everyday experience, slowly slowly, will become

your twenty-four-hour silent experience. There is no need to say to anybody that you are a buddha; they themselves will understand. You cannot hide a fire; you cannot hide a buddha either.

Question 1
Maneesha has asked:
OUR BELOVED MASTER,
THIS UNSPEAKABLE THAT YOU ARE TRYING TO COMMUNICATE TO US, THIS UNGRASPABLE THAT WE ARE TRYING TO GET -- SOMETIMES IT SEEMS PROFOUNDLY MYSTERIOUS, SOMETIMES IT SEEMS EMBARRASSINGLY OBVIOUS. IS IT EITHER OF THESE -- OR BOTH TOGETHER?

Maneesha, it is both together.
From one standpoint it is obvious. For those who know, it is obvious. For those who don't know, it is very mysterious. But it is the same thing. Our effort is to move from the point of obviousness to the point of mysteriousness... turning your simplicity into innocence; bringing back your childhood fragrance and freshness.
Buddha is not a foreigner; buddha is your innermost core -- where nobody else has been able to reach; otherwise they would have changed its face. It is the place where only you can go -- that's why it has remained original. Otherwise, society would have colored it, managed it in such a way that it becomes useful and purposeful for the society. But nobody can reach within you except you.

And certainly when you know your mysterious existence, you don't want to be anyone else. You have come to the point where the whole cosmos welcomes you home.

(A FLASH OF LIGHTNING STREAKS THROUGH THE DARKNESS OUTSIDE THE HALL, FOLLOWED BY THUNDER AND A STEADY, GENTLE RAIN.)

Now the clouds have come... As long as you are going to laugh, the clouds are going to come to listen. They come at the right moment.

Dogski staggers home late one night after drinking about a thousand beers. When he comes into the bedroom, he discovers his wife lying half-naked on the bed, and a strange man in the act of removing his pants.
"For the last time, lady," says the man, thinking furiously, "if you don't pay your gas bill right now, I'll shit on the floor!"

Max Muldoon gets drafted to fight in Ronald Reagan's new war in the Middle East, and he does not like the idea at all. He does everything he can to avoid being in the army, but somehow finds himself in General Grimguts' Marine platoon.
One day, Max is in the front line of battle. The noise is terrifying as bullets and bombs fly all around him. Max looks up in horror and then throws down his gun.
"I have had enough!" he shouts, and he starts running away from the front lines.

Many people try to stop him as he runs, but Max pays no attention to them. He runs and runs until he bumps right into General Grimguts himself.
"Stop!" roars Grimguts.
"What for?" shouts back Max.
"I am ordering you to stop!" shouts the General. "I am your commanding officer!"
"My god!" replies Max, quite surprised. "Am I that far back already?"

Sixteen-year-old Sally tiptoes into the confession box in the Holy Martyred Virgins' Church, where Father Fumble is sitting.
"Father," whispers Sally, "I have sinned!"
"Tell me all about it!" replies the young priest.
"Well, Father," continues Sally, "my boyfriend Willy came home with me the other day, and I took him to my room."
"Really?" says Father Fumble. "And what happened in there?"
"Well, Father," continues Sally, "Willy pushed me back onto the bed and started taking my clothes off."
"Really?" says Father Fumble. "And what happened next?"
"Then Willy took off his clothes and jumped on top of me!" sobs Sally.
"Ahem!" coughs Fumble, clearing his throat. "And tell me, my child, did you feel his organ coming between your legs?"
"I'm not a musician," replies Sally, "but I would say it felt more like a flute!"

Nivedano...

Nivedano...

Be silent... close your eyes. Feel your body to be frozen.
Look inwards with your totality,
straight ahead.
Just a little more
and you will be encountering your real self.

It is raining outside, but inside
it is only mist.
Get drenched in it.
Drop your mask, and when you come back,
come back with your original face.
Your original face is the buddha.

To get hold of it totally... Nivedano...

Relax... just watch the body and the mind, and remember you are neither. You are the watcher.
This already beautiful evening becomes more ecstatic by your watching. Just watching, you will feel utter emptiness.
The emptiness is the name of buddha himself.
This silence...
you have all become one in an oceanic consciousness.
Boundaries are lost,
limits are forgotten...

Collect this experience, because you have to carry it twenty-four hours -- in all your actions and gestures, words and silences.

Nivedano...

Come back, but come back
with your original face.
Silent, peaceful, graceful -- a buddha.
Sit like a buddha for a few seconds, and remember it twenty-four hours.
It is not an achievement, it is just a remembrance of your forgotten self.
It is obvious, but it is mysterious also.

Okay Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Can we celebrate the gathering of the ten thousand buddhas?
Yes, Beloved Master.

## The Buddha: The Emptiness of the Heart

**Chapter #**7
Chapter title: From the surface to the center
14 September 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
SHOITSU SAID TO CHIZEN:
IN THE SCHOOL OF THE ANCESTRAL TEACHERS,
WE POINT DIRECTLY TO THE HUMAN MIND.

VERBAL EXPLANATIONS AND ILLUSTRATIVE DEVICES ACTUALLY MISS THE POINT.
NOT FALLING INTO SEEING AND HEARING, NOT FOLLOWING SOUND OR FORM, ACTING FREELY IN THE PHENOMENAL WORLD, SITTING AND LYING IN THE HEAP OF MYRIAD FORMS, NOT INVOLVED WITH PHENOMENA IN BREATHING OUT, NOT BOUND TO THE CLUSTERS AND ELEMENTS OF EXISTENCE IN BREATHING IN, THE WHOLE WORLD IS THE GATE OF LIBERATION. ALL WORLDS ARE TRUE REALITY.
A UNIVERSAL MASTER KNOWS WHAT IT COMES TO, THE MOMENT IT IS RAISED. HOW WILL BEGINNERS AND LATECOMERS COME TO GRIPS WITH IT?
IF YOU DON'T GET IT YET, FOR THE TIME BEING WE OPEN UP A PATHWAY IN THE GATEWAY OF THE SECONDARY TRUTH. SPEAK OUT WHERE THERE IS NOTHING TO SAY; MANIFEST FORM IN THE MIDST OF FORMLESSNESS.
DURING YOUR DAILY ACTIVITIES RESPONDING TO CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE REALM OF DISTINCTIONS, DON'T THINK OF GETTING RID OF ANYTHING. DON'T UNDERSTAND IT AS A HIDDEN MARVEL -- WITH NO ROAD OF REASON, NO FLAVOR, DAY AND NIGHT, FORGETTING SLEEP AND FOOD, KEEP THOSE SAYINGS IN MIND.
IF YOU STILL DON'T GET IT, WE GO ON TO SPEAK OF THE TERTIARY, EXPOUNDING MIND AND NATURE, SPEAKING OF MYSTERY AND MARVEL.
ONE ATOM CONTAINS THE COSMOS, ONE

THOUGHT PERVADES EVERYWHERE. THUS AN ANCIENT SAID:
"INFINITE LANDS AND WORLDS WITH NO DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN SELF AND OTHERS, TEN AGES PAST AND PRESENT ARE NEVER APART FROM THIS MOMENT OF THOUGHT."

Maneesha, the whole point of Zen, its whole philosophy, its whole theology, is contained in the present moment. If you can stay in the present moment, the doors of wisdom will open on their own. In a thousand ways the same thing has been said, again and again: This moment contains everything -- the whole universe -- past, present and future. This moment is all. If we can enter into this moment's reality, we will be entering the very center of the universe, the very source of life.
Zen's interest is not in gods, not in paradises. Its interest is absolutely life, known in its eternity, with all its joys and celebrations. It is a religion of celebration. It is not sad, serious. Because it is not going to achieve anything, it cannot fail. Its victory is absolutely certain because what it is seeking is already there within you. It is everybody's life source. Combined, it becomes the life source of the whole universe. We are just small branches coming out of the universal source.
The moment you realize your universality, all your anxieties appear to be so trivial, so tiny... just the very realization of your eternity makes them disappear, they become shadows. The moment you realize your life source, they lose their reality. In other words your anxieties, your problems and your anguish are real if you don't know

yourself. That is your life, if you don't know your life source.

What has come to be known as existentialism in the West must have preceded Gautam Buddha in the East. Existentialism says life is nothing but anguish, anxiety, angst; it has no meaning. There is only failure; that is your destiny. It gives a very dark color, a very negative approach, to existence. Listening to the modern existentialists one can only feel that perhaps suicide is the only way out. Life in every possible way is going to be full of anxiety.

My own understanding is that before the time of Gautam Buddha there must have been the same kind of feeling in the East, that life is meaningless. I know the names of at least three people who were very famous in those days, but all their literature has been destroyed because their whole point of view was against life. One was Sanjay Bilattiputta, another was Ajit Keshkambal, and the third was Gosal. These three people were as intelligent as any Gautam Buddha. But they preached that life is meaningless; all the meaning that you give to it is your imagination. It is just a hope that keeps you going on, through all the sufferings, through all the meaningless incidents. And from the cradle to the grave, you will not find a single place where you can rest. It is just restlessness.

But with Gautam Buddha, things took a different turn -- a turn which is enormous. The West needs a Gautam Buddha; otherwise the idea of meaninglessness, anxiety, anguish, is bound to create the idea of suicide as the way out. Gautam Buddha accepts everything that existentialism says, but he says life is meaningless and full of anxiety

because you have not gone deep enough into your being. On the surface it is all turmoil, just as you see in the ocean: on the surface there is so much turmoil but in the depths there is absolute silence.

The deeper you go into the ocean, the more silent... absolute silence. And attaining the absolute silence you start looking at things with different eyes. The same things are there, the world is the same, but because you now have different eyes, you start seeing in a different way. The same roseflower becomes so beautiful that there is no need for it to have any purpose; just its beauty is enough unto itself. The song of a cuckoo may not have any meaning but it has a beauty, a grandeur which penetrates to the very heart. And if the heart is emptied by meditation, it gives you a glimpse of authentic music, spontaneous music. Everything around you starts taking a different shape, a different context. The only change that is needed is that you go from the surface to the center of your being.

Now this point is very important to understand, because a few have escaped the surface by renouncing the world. They think it is the world that is creating a disturbance, it is the world that is responsible for our anxieties. That has been the traditional attitude of the sannyasin, of the monk. Just leave this world, hide behind a monastery or behind a mountain, just to attain a little peace.

But I know that even hiding behind a mountain, your mind will be the same as it was in the marketplace. It will create troubles and anxieties there, too. Perhaps more than ever, because the cold winter will come and you don't have enough clothes, the hot summer will come and you don't have a roof, a shelter. And from where are you going to get

your food? Again you will have to come by the back door, as a beggar, to the same marketplace that you have renounced.

All these so-called saints who have renounced the world have simply become dependent on the world, parasites, but they have not attained any new vision. So the way that takes you away from the turmoil is not the right way. The right way is to go as deep into the turmoil as possible, because in the depths there are no waves, there is no turmoil.

My sannyasin is not to renounce anything in the world. Everything is beautiful. If it does not appeal to you, something is wrong with you. Go inside. First seek and search the source of your being, of your life. Once you have caught the roots of your being, then come out and open your eyes and you will see the same world but with a new color, with a new intensity, with a new love, with a new beauty. The same world is no more the same because you are no more the same. By transforming yourself you have transformed the whole world.

It is absolutely right when Gautam Buddha says, "The moment I became enlightened the whole world became enlightened. Everything appeared to me to be a buddha, either awake or asleep. I could see, even in the flowers or grasses or stones, buddhas fast asleep."

The whole of existence is by its very nature nothing but consciousness, and consciousness can be of different depths. The stone may be very fast asleep. You cannot wake it, but that does not mean that there is no life source hidden in the stone. The stone grows. The Himalayas are growing one foot taller every year. Just stupid fellows!

Already they are the tallest mountains in the world, but the same stupidity that human beings have... they go on growing.

Some older mountains in India -- the oldest mountain is Vindhyachal -- have stopped growing millions of years ago. Seeing that there is no point... what are you going to do, unnecessarily growing high? Just enjoy. You cannot enjoy while you are involved in achieving something. When you are not involved in achieving, when there is no desire to reach somewhere, you can enjoy the moment, here, now.

Zen is the religion of here and now. Always remember this context in whatsoever statements we are discussing. It is a totally different approach from that of other religions. Even the Buddhists don't accept Zen, because Zen has such rebelliousness, such independence that it cannot accept any authority unless it is the authority of your own experience. Even Buddhists think of Zen as a little eccentric, outside the mold, not belonging to the vast stream of Buddhism. But as far as I am concerned, it is the essence of Buddha's very heart. Without Zen, Buddhism is as dead a religion as any other religion. It is Zen which still brings flowers, it is Zen which is still a garden; all the other religions have become deserts. But why does it go on bringing flowers? Because its dependence is not on scriptures, on tradition. Its very world is limited within you, and if you change, the world around you has to change accordingly.

A man like Gautam Buddha, just by being awakened, changes the character of everything around him. His vision, his radiance, his presence... at least for him it is a different world.

These small statements by Zen masters have to be very carefully heard. You are not to agree or disagree. If you start agreeing or disagreeing you miss the point.
Listen silently as if you are listening to the sound of a river, or the sound of the wind blowing through the pine trees. Just hear it, without bringing your mind in to say, "Yes, it is right," or "No, it is not right."
Any statement or interpretation by your mind is going to distort the whole thing. The statement is not linguistic. It is not the language, it is something invisible, side by side with the language, that is being transmitted. So if you silently hear, the language does not matter. Your silence grows deeper -- that's what matters. What the language was saying is immaterial, it was just a vehicle.

Just a few days ago Anando brought me the news. I have never thought about it, and I don't think anybody has ever thought about it -- they have just discovered that electricity does not run in the wires but along the sides, next to the wire -- a fellow traveler, not inside the wire. It takes the help of the wire, but -- this is a very significant discovery -- the electricity is not in the wire itself.
To me, it takes on a new significance: the words of the master are not the real message; the words are just like the wires for electricity. Alongside the wires runs a message invisible to the eyes, only able to be understood by an empty heart.
Sit silently, in utter emptiness. Your agreement or disagreement are not needed. Just your silence deepening, your emptiness becoming more and more empty, and you

have understood without even bothering about the words. Those words were all arbitrary.

SHOITSU SAID TO CHIZEN:
IN THE SCHOOL OF THE ANCESTRAL TEACHERS, WE POINT DIRECTLY TO THE HUMAN MIND. VERBAL EXPLANATIONS AND ILLUSTRATIVE DEVICES ACTUALLY MISS THE POINT.
The question is, how to indicate to you the way to your own heart. Shoitsu is saying that VERBAL EXPLANATIONS AND ILLUSTRATIVE DEVICES ACTUALLY MISS THE POINT -- most of the time. Once in a while, a person has understood that it is not language or philosophy, but the words are used just like a wire and running alongside is a life, an energy. That energy can be absorbed only by your empty heart. If the heart is full of things, too much furniture... life energy will not enter a space which is too full. It enters only into utter emptiness. Shoitsu is saying, WE POINT DIRECTLY TO THE HUMAN MIND.
What are we doing here? I talk with you, but that is only a preparation so that in meditation I can point directly to your heart. A certain preparation is absolutely needed to cut away all garbage, to throw out all the scriptures, to expel all the ancient buddhas and siddhas, so that you are left absolutely alone. From that point meditation can start. When your heart is utterly empty, it is not difficult to point to the source of your being.
NOT FALLING INTO SEEING AND HEARING, NOT FOLLOWING SOUND OR FORM, ACTING FREELY IN THE PHENOMENAL WORLD, SITTING AND LYING

IN THE HEAP OF MYRIAD FORMS, NOT INVOLVED WITH PHENOMENA IN BREATHING OUT, NOT BOUND TO THE CLUSTERS AND ELEMENTS OF EXISTENCE IN BREATHING IN, THE WHOLE WORLD IS THE GATE OF LIBERATION. ALL WORLDS ARE TRUE REALITY.

If you have concentrated your life energy in the empty heart, then all that is false simply disappears and only the real remains. Then the whole world is real, then there is no need to say that it is illusory. It has been said to be illusory by those escapists who wanted to run away from it. They needed some excuse. They called this whole world, all relationships, everything, illusory -- just like dreams.

I have always wondered... I have met with many escapist saints and I have asked them, "If you really see that this world is illusory, made of the same stuff as dreams are made of, why are you escaping from it? What is the point? According to you the world does not exist. You are renouncing a non-existential world!"

If the world does not exist, then why not enjoy it? Have good, nice dreams -- drop nightmares! Sort things out: whatever is a nightmare, drop it.

And that is what happens when a man reaches his center. That which is a nightmare -- and your whole life up to now has been a nightmare -- simply disappears. And a tremendously beautiful world arises out of the ashes of the old world that you used to know. It looks the same but because your vision is different, it is not the same.

Not a single saint I have met -- and I have been roaming around for almost thirty-five years and I have met almost all kinds of saints, Hindu, Jaina, Mohammedan, Christian --

not a single one has been able to answer a simple question: if the world is illusory, then it does not matter, let it be there; where are you going? Escaping from a world that is illusory is so stupid an act. If the world is real there is some point in escaping from it if you don't want it. But it is illusory! And if illusions arise out of your mind, then wherever you go, the illusions will arise.

A great saint was dying and he said to his successor, a young man, "Remember one thing: never allow a cat in your life," and he died. A big crowd had gathered to listen to the last statement of this great saint... and what a sentence! "Never allow a cat in your life." The successor said, "My god, why should I allow a cat in my life in the first place? And this is the whole religion?" But an old man -- who was also a disciple, but was not chosen as a successor because he was too old; he was himself going to die within a year or two -- said, "You don't know, there is a long story behind it. He has just given you the punch line." He said, "Then I must know the whole story."
The story was that when the saint renounced his wife and children and his home and went into the Himalayas, he lived near a small village. Otherwise, from where will you get your food? But the villagers were happy that they had a saint of their own, so they made a small bamboo cottage for him.
The Indian monks used, in place of underwear, just a long strip of cloth called langot. It is a "mini" -- mini-est -- because just a long strip... they wrap it around themselves. They were allowed to have only two langotis. But a trouble arose: some rats came into the house and they started

chewing on the langot. The man was in a great difficulty; he had only two langotis and soon they would be gone. So he asked the villagers, "What to do? because my sect does not allow a saint to have more than two langotis. That's the only possession allowed."

They said, "Why don't you take a cat from the village? She will kill the rats." It was a perfectly rational solution. So the villagers gave him a good cat, and the cat killed the rats. But the problem was, now he had to beg for his food and the cat also needed something to eat, because the rats were finished. So he had to beg for some milk for the cat.

The villagers said, "This is a small village... the best thing for us is that you have a cow. The whole village can contribute some money and purchase a beautiful cow, and in that way you will become very independent. You can have enough milk for yourself and for your cat."

It looked right, so a beautiful cow was brought in. Now the problem was that the cow needed grass. So every day he had to go to the village to beg for the grass. People said, "This does not look right. A great saint asking for grass? In fact no saint has ever asked for grass; it is not conventional."

He said, "But what to do? My cow, my cat..."

So they said, "A simple solution: we are villagers, we don't know much about your philosophy. One woman has become a widow; her husband has died, and she has nobody. So we will persuade her. She will be really happy to serve a saint and then you don't have to come every day. We will clear some ground by the side of your hut so she can grow grass, she can grow wheat... and she will take care of you in sickness, in illness."

The idea was right -- it was always right. It was not much effort to persuade the woman; she was alone and the saint was young... there was a possibility, a hope. So she immediately agreed. She started taking care, and you know how things grow....

Basho says, "The grass grows by itself." In fact many things grow by themselves. So grass started growing, they fell in love... the woman was beautiful, the saint was young. What more is needed? They worked in the field, they started growing wheat and they started growing grass. The cat was very happy and the cow was very happy, everything was perfect. But then the ultimate -- children came in, and then he thought, "My god, that's what I had left behind! I have renounced the world -- this is the whole world again! It grew so slowly that I was not aware until the children came."

Now, just because of the cat the whole world came in. The old man said, "That was the punch line. He told you, `Remember not to allow a cat,' because behind the cat the whole world comes in. He was talking about his own life story, how he again became engaged in the same world -- taking children to the school... and people started laughing at him: `What kind of saint are you? You are keeping a woman! You have fallen down from your greatness.'

"But what to do now? Once you have fallen, you have fallen; it is very difficult to rise again. He thought many times to renounce again, but he thought -- what is the point? Those rats are everywhere. Again the same story will start. It is better to be silent."

Your mind, your body, both need certain things. You cannot renounce the world, you can only become a beggar.

But to become a beggar is not to become a saint. My understanding is clear, that you should be in the world. There is nothing to be afraid of; you should just concentrate your life energy within yourself and that makes all the difference. You remain in the world and yet you are not in the world. You are in the world but the world is not in you. And to me, that is the true definition of a sannyasin: remaining in the world, just like a lotus flower, remaining in the water but untouched by it.

A UNIVERSAL MASTER KNOWS WHAT IT COMES TO, THE MOMENT IT IS RAISED. HOW WILL BEGINNERS AND LATECOMERS COME TO GRIPS WITH IT?

IF YOU DON'T GET IT YET, FOR THE TIME BEING WE OPEN UP A PATHWAY IN THE GATEWAY OF THE SECONDARY TRUTH.

I don't agree on that point. Shoitsu is saying that if you cannot understand the direct pointing to your heart, then we have to descend a little lower -- but that will be "secondary truth." That will be just like the moon reflected in water; it will not be the true moon. It will be only a reflected moon. In language, truth at the most can be just a reflection. So he is saying that if you cannot get it directly, instantly, then we will have to come down to language.

I don't agree with the statement because my understanding is that you have to begin with language. You have to begin with the reflection of the moon in the water. And if you have seen the reflection in the water you can be told to look up a little: "It is only a reflection; the reality is there high up in the sky." Language is not a secondary thing to be used when the first has failed. Language is the primary

thing, to create the background for pointing directly to your innermost heart.
SPEAK OUT WHERE THERE IS NOTHING TO SAY; MANIFEST FORM IN THE MIDST OF FORMLESSNESS.
DURING YOUR DAILY ACTIVITIES RESPONDING TO CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE REALM OF DISTINCTIONS, DON'T THINK OF GETTING RID OF ANYTHING.
On that point I am in agreement with him.
... DON'T THINK OF GETTING RID OF ANYTHING. DON'T UNDERSTAND IT AS A HIDDEN MARVEL -- WITH NO ROAD OF REASON, NO FLAVOR, DAY AND NIGHT, FORGETTING SLEEP AND FOOD, KEEP THOSE SAYINGS IN MIND.
IF YOU STILL DON'T GET IT, WE GO ON TO SPEAK OF THE TERTIARY,
The third step, if you don't understand the language, he says then we will have to descend even a little lower. I think that I not only disagree with him, but it is humiliating to the disciples to say, "We will have to speak on a third level."
... EXPOUNDING MIND AND NATURE, SPEAKING OF MYSTERY AND MARVEL. ONE ATOM CONTAINS THE COSMOS, ONE THOUGHT PERVADES EVERYWHERE. THUS AN ANCIENT SAID:
"INFINITE LANDS AND WORLDS
WITH NO DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN SELF AND OTHERS,
TEN AGES PAST AND PRESENT

ARE NEVER APART FROM THIS MOMENT OF THOUGHT."

Shoitsu is putting the bullocks behind the cart -- of course there will not be much progress. The bullocks have to be in front of the cart; the words, the language, have to be a primary preparation for the ultimate understanding of your life source. There is only one way, and that is pointing directly to your heart. There are not some lower ways, some higher ways; there is only one way.

He is saying, "We will try the second way, and if even that does not work, we will go still lower." This is happening because he is putting things the wrong way round. The bullocks have to be ahead of the cart, and then everything is okay. Language, concepts, words, all have to be used in preparing the ground for emptiness. And you know by your experience here that it works. I am talking to you, I am using words and concepts; still a great silence is being created within you.

This silence can be deepened by meditation. And when you are deep in meditation, silent, just a watchful witness, the direct pointing by the master can happen. I don't have to explain it to you because you go through the process every day.

A Zen poet, Kanzan wrote:

TALKING ABOUT FOOD WON'T MAKE YOU FULL,
BABBLING OF CLOTHES WON'T KEEP OUT THE COLD.
A BOWL OF RICE IS WHAT FILLS THE BELLY;
IT TAKES A SUIT OF CLOTHING TO MAKE YOU WARM.

AND YET, WITHOUT STOPPING TO CONSIDER THIS,
YOU COMPLAIN THAT BUDDHA IS HARD TO FIND.
TURN YOUR MIND WITHIN!
THERE HE IS!
WHY LOOK FOR HIM ABROAD?

This small haiku says much more than Shoitsu, and clearly. Two things:
TALKING ABOUT FOOD WON'T MAKE YOU FULL; BABBLING OF CLOTHES WON'T KEEP OUT THE COLD. A BOWL OF RICE IS WHAT FILLS THE BELLY; IT TAKES A SUIT OF CLOTHING TO MAKE YOU WARM. AND YET, WITHOUT STOPPING TO CONSIDER THIS, YOU COMPLAIN THAT BUDDHA IS HARD TO FIND. TURN YOUR MIND WITHIN! THERE HE IS! WHY LOOK FOR HIM ABROAD?
You have been looking for him outside for centuries, for many many lives. It is time to give a chance to your interiority. Look for him withinwards, and what you have not found outside, you will find, without fail, inside. Nobody in the whole history of consciousness has failed to find the buddha if he has looked withinwards. Without any exception, everybody who has looked in, has found the buddha. You cannot be an exception. You cannot be, because life itself in its purity is the buddha.

Question 1
Maneesha has asked:
OUR BELOVED MASTER,

WHEN WE FUNCTION FROM THE PERIPHERY, WHEN WE FUNCTION OUT OF UNAWARENESS, IT SEEMS THAT OUR ENERGY GETS CAUGHT UP SOMEHOW AND SO OUR MAXIMUM ENERGY IS NOT AVAILABLE. IS IT TRUE THAT WHEN WE FUNCTION FROM OUR EMPTINESS, WE COULD HAVE ACCESS TO UNLIMITED ENERGY?

Maneesha, what you are asking is almost true. Just on one point you have to be reminded -- that when your energy is not involved in anything... Your last sentence is, "we could have access to unlimited energy." When your energy is not involved in anything, you will not be there. So the question of your access to unlimited energy does not arise. You will be ultimate energy; it will not be something that will be available to you. You will have merged with it, you will be it.

Never think in terms of separation. It is just one experience: you and the cosmos becoming one. There is no need... the whole cosmos is you, so never think in terms of access, achievement. Those words are wrong words. They are perfectly usable in the ordinary world, in the ordinary-world matters, but as you enter in, you are entering into a different dimension of being where you have never been. All your words will defy you. Whatever you experience will not be possible to express. And finally there will be no one to express it.

The ultimate experience is when you disappear, when there is nobody but pure awareness. It will not be your awareness or my awareness, it will be simply awareness.

Before we enter into the meditation, Sardar Gurudayal Singh has to be given a chance....

Popova the Russian mouse gets a visa to visit the West. Her friend, Barbarov the elephant, hears the news and wants to go along too. After a little hesitation, Popova agrees to take her friend with her.
The little mouse bakes a beautiful loaf of French bread, slices it in half down the middle, and puts one half along either side of big Barbarov.
At the Moscow airport, the police officials check Popova's papers and her baggage, and then wave her through. Barbarov, the elephant, is stopped.
"Where are your papers?" asks a policeman.
Popova the mouse turns around, really pissed off. "What's the matter with you guys?" she squeaks loudly. "Can't I even take a sandwich with me?"

Swami Jivan Joke is sitting with his girlfriend, Ma Bliss-abyss, at the back gate.
"Isn't it wonderful?" coos Bliss-abyss. "This is our third anniversary of being together, and everything is so spiritual!"
"It is?" asks Jivan Joke, shaking and trying to learn how to smoke a beedie.
"Sure!" smiles Bliss-abyss, winking at several of her new boyfriends. "We've been together for three years, and now we are experimenting with the other side -- being apart and free!"
"Oh, that!" says Joke, twitching nervously, and trying to stay centered.

"Yes," giggles Bliss-abyss, "and with all this new energy and all these new friends...!"
"My god!" interrupts Jivan Joke. "Are you ovulating again?"
"No, silly!" replies Bliss-abyss, "but since tonight is our anniversary, what shall we do?"
"Well," says Joke, closing his eyes and trying to meditate. "Let's do like everyone else I know is doing -- let's go in and celibate!"

General Jackass, now retired, is walking down the street one day when he sees Donald Dixteen. Donald used to serve as the general's valet during the last war.
General Jackass is very happy to see Donald, and shaking hands, tells Donald that he is looking for someone to take the job as his personal butler.
"You'll have exactly the same duties you had with me in the army," smiles the general. "You can begin by waking me up tomorrow morning at eight o'clock."
Donald takes the job, and the following morning, he rushes into the general's bedroom and shakes him until he wakes up.
Then he slaps the general's wife on the ass, and shouts, "Okay, baby! Here's your twenty dollars, it's time to go home!"

Nivedano...

Nivedano... Be silent, close your eyes, feel the body to be completely frozen.

Look inwards, as deep as possible, because the life source is not very far away. It is just in your empty heart. An absolutely concentrated look into your being, and you have encountered your buddhahood.
Your very life source is also the life source of the whole universe.
Deeper and deeper, so that you can gather the inner experience and bring it out into your daily life.
Slowly slowly
your buddha has to become
your very expression, your very lifestyle.

Nivedano...

Let go. Just be a watcher...
The mind is there, the body is there,
but you are not the body
and you are not the mind.
You are just the watcher.
This watcher is called the buddha.
Watching, witnessing, silently your heart becomes empty.
And the empty heart is the buddha.
Let it sink deep, in every fiber of your being. This is the most precious moment -- when you are just a witness and a tremendous silence surrounds you.

It is a great, blissful evening.
Your recognition of your buddha nature
and your recognition that you are one with the whole...
There are not ten thousand buddhas here
but just one consciousness.

Nivedano...

Come back.
But come back not the way you had gone in; come back more gracefully, more peacefully, more like a buddha.
Sit down for a few moments to recollect the experience, to remember the space you have gone into, to remember the path that you have followed.
Whatever you have experienced in your witnessing is going to affect and change your twenty-four hours' life.
Unless meditation becomes a revolution, a revolution of your whole character, it is not meditation.
Meditation liberates you from yourself and brings the new, original face which we have named the buddha. Remember in your day-to-day work who you are. Let your inside affect your activities, your gestures, your language, your relations.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Can we celebrate the ten thousand buddhas?
Yes!

## The Buddha: The Emptiness of the Heart

**Chapter #**8
Chapter title: The man of enlightened freedom
15 September 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
ENGO SAID:
THE ENLIGHTENED MAN ENJOYS PERFECT FREEDOM IN ACTIVE LIFE. HE IS LIKE A DRAGON SUPPORTED BY DEEP WATERS, OR LIKE A TIGER THAT COMMANDS ITS MOUNTAIN RETREAT. THE MAN WHO IS NOT ENLIGHTENED DRIFTS ABOUT IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE WORLD. HE IS LIKE A RAM THAT GETS ITS HORNS CAUGHT IN A FENCE, OR LIKE A MAN WHO WAITS FOR A HARE TO RUN AGAINST A TREE STUMP AND STUN ITSELF.
THE ENLIGHTENED MAN'S WORDS ARE SOMETIMES LIKE A LION CROUCHED TO SPRING, SOMETIMES LIKE THE DIAMOND KING'S TREASURE SWORD. SOMETIMES THEIR EFFECT IS TO SHUT THE MOUTHS OF THE WORLD-FAMED ONES, SOMETIMES IT IS AS IF THEY SIMPLY FOLLOW THE WAVES COMING ONE AFTER ANOTHER.
WHEN THE ENLIGHTENED MAN MEETS OTHERS WHO ARE ENLIGHTENED, THEN FRIEND MEETS FRIEND. HE VALUES THEM, AND THEY ENCOURAGE EACH OTHER. WHEN HE MEETS THOSE WHO ARE ADRIFT IN THE WORLD, THEN MASTER MEETS DISCIPLE. HIS WAY OF DEALING WITH SUCH PEOPLE IS FARSIGHTED. HE STANDS FIRM BEFORE THEM, LIKE A THOUSAND-FATHOM CLIFF.
THEREFORE IT IS SAID THAT THE WAY OF THE ABSOLUTE IS MANIFEST EVERYWHERE: IT HAS

NO FIXED RULES AND REGULATIONS. THE MASTER SOMETIMES MAKES A BLADE OF GRASS STAND FOR THE GOLDEN-FACED BUDDHA, SIXTEEN FEET HIGH, AND SOMETIMES MAKES THE GOLDEN-FACED BUDDHA, SIXTEEN FEET HIGH, STAND FOR A BLADE OF GRASS.
ON ANOTHER OCCASION, ENGO SAID:
THE UNIVERSE IS NOT VEILED; ALL ITS ACTIVITIES LIE OPEN. WHICHEVER WAY HE MAY GO, THE ENLIGHTENED MAN MEETS NO OBSTRUCTION. AT ALL TIMES HE BEHAVES INDEPENDENTLY. HIS EVERY WORD IS DEVOID OF EGOCENTRICITY, YET STILL HAS THE POWER TO KILL OTHERS.
ONCE THE DELUSIVE WAY OF THINKING IS CUT OFF, A THOUSAND EYES ARE SUDDENLY OPENED. ONE WORD BLOCKING THE STREAM OF THOUGHT, AND ALL NON-ACTIONS ARE CONTROLLED. IS THERE ANYONE WHO WOULD UNDERGO THE EXPERIENCE OF DYING THE SAME DEATH AND LIVING THE SAME LIFE AS THE BUDDHA? TRUTH IS MANIFEST EVERYWHERE.

Maneesha, this is the last talk of the series called **THE BUDDHA: THE EMPTINESS OF THE HEART**.
It is very appropriate -- exactly the right time -- that you have brought the great master Engo's statement about the enlightened man.
For centuries man has been thinking about the definition of enlightenment. A long succession of efforts have been made, but nobody has been able to bring a perfect

definition of enlightenment, or of enlightened men. Engo comes very close, almost to the point; hence he has to be heard with absolute silence. He is saying something which is difficult to say. His effort is tremendously valuable.

He says about the enlightened man:

THE ENLIGHTENED MAN ENJOYS PERFECT FREEDOM IN ACTIVE LIFE.

That is the foundation of his following statements; it has to be understood, with all its implications.

The unconscious man lives according to others -- either following them or denying them, but the focus is always the other. So there are followers and there are anti-followers; there are theists and there are atheists. But at the very foundation they are no different. One is positively in favor of some doctrine and one is negative, reactive, against the same doctrine, but both are hanging on to something other than themselves. They are other-oriented.

I am always reminded of Jean-Paul Sartre, and his statement that "the other is hell." He may have made it in a different context, but in itself the statement is valuable. I want you to know: the other is hell because the other takes away your freedom. It may be done very lovingly, without any bad intention. It may be done with all good intentions but that does not matter: the ancient saying is that "the path to hell is paved with good intentions."

The parents, the teachers, the neighbors, the friends -- all are continuously giving a shape to your life, a style to your life. If you look into your mind you will find many voices together: your father is speaking, your grandfather is speaking, your mother, your brother, your teachers, your professors. But one thing you will not find there is your

voice. Your voice has been completely repressed by other voices.

Layer upon layer, you have lost track even of your own voice, of your own self, of your own face. So many masks...

When a small child comes into the world, he is just a clean slate; and you immediately start writing on his slate without even bothering to ask his permission. You make him a Christian, you make him a Hindu, you make him a Mohammedan; you make him anything you want to make him -- and you don't understand that consciousness is not something that you can give a mode to, a certain pattern.

What ultimately happens from all your efforts and intentions is a hypocrite, a person who knows that he is doing something but his heart is not in it. He becomes phony; he becomes a slave of all the others who surround him. Not only the living ones but the dead ones also are creating your slavery.

Engo's statement is, THE ENLIGHTENED MAN ENJOYS PERFECT FREEDOM IN ACTIVE LIFE. He is not a slave to any tradition, to any culture, to any civilization. He lives according to his own spontaneity, according to his own awareness.

And that is one of the troubles: the enlightened person is bound to be misunderstood, because the whole world is full of slaves. They cannot understand the language of freedom. It is almost like selling eyeglasses to a world of blind people. Even if they have the glasses, they are of no use -- they cannot see, they don't have the eyes.

A man went to one eye specialist and asked him, "Check my eyes. Do you think I will be able to read if you prescribe glasses?"
The eye specialist said, "Of course you will be able to read."
He wrote the prescription and the glasses were made. But the man said, "By the way, I must inform you that I don't know how to read."
The specialist said, "You are strange! You should have said this before, because even with glasses, if you don't know how to read, you are not going to read."
People are carrying scriptures which describe freedom, which even talk about freedom from scriptures. People are worshipping statues of persons like Gautam Buddha whose last words were, "Remember these are my last words, my last wish: my statues should not be made." Ten thousand sannyasins were listening, and as it happened, there are now more statues of Gautam Buddha in the world than of anyone else. A single temple in China even has ten thousand Buddhas. The whole mountain, miles long, has been carved into Buddha statues.
It is strange blindness. It is strange misunderstanding.... And a man of freedom is bound to be condemned by slaves because the slaves cannot accept the idea that they are slaves. So anybody who is enlightened and becomes a man of freedom, becomes a danger to millions of egos. His freedom to fly across the sky with open wings is bound to be condemned by all those who are crippled, who are caught in cages. The cages may be of gold -- very precious, cozy, a good shelter -- but the joy of being on your own

wings in the sky, unlimited, with no barriers, no boundaries, is much more valuable than any golden cage.
Engo says, THE ENLIGHTENED MAN ENJOYS PERFECT FREEDOM IN ACTIVE LIFE. He is not bound by any morality, not bound by any rules, not bound by any ethos, not bound by any society, any civilization, any culture, any education. He remains true and honest to his own being. He does not care whether his action is going against the society, whether his action is going against the scriptures. All that he is committed to is his own spontaneous response. He has no other commitments. He cannot be a Christian or a Mohammedan or a Jew or a Jaina. He can only be a human being without any fetters.
But naturally he has to suffer. He has to suffer because the whole crowd is of slaves, blind people. They feel hurt -- deeply hurt -- by his presence, by his freedom. They continuously compare, and feel deep down guilty that they have never stood up for their own freedom. They have remained sheep, just part of a crowd; they never declared their individuality. And now there is a man of absolute freedom.
Those who have any intelligence will fall in love with this man of freedom; but very few people have intelligence. Most people live without any intelligence in their life -- a robot life, almost mechanical. They all are going to be against such persons -- in the name of religion, in the name of morality, in the name of society. Their excuse is that these people are dangerous: if everybody starts functioning according to his own truth, then there will be no society, no state, no nation, no army, no war.

The whole society is committed to such stupid things that a man of enlightened freedom cannot be committed to any of them. He cannot be Indian or French or Chinese; the whole earth is one for him. His every action is according to his own consciousness, not according to any teaching of some dead, so-called wise person. He has his own eyes to see; why should he listen to others? He has his own ears to hear; why should he listen to others? He has his own consciousness to decide; why should he follow the ten commandments of Moses, or the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus, or the SHRIMAD BHAGAVADGITA of Krishna? They may be beautiful, but they are not going to guide your life.

The moment you have guidelines from others, you are spiritually a slave.

In other words, Engo is saying the enlightened man lives according to his own life source, without any consideration or compromise with the crowd. He is absolutely an individualist and he wants everybody else also to be individualists.

There is nothing more valuable than freedom because only in freedom can you blossom to your ultimate potential. As a slave you are crippled, you are cut, you are in a mold; you are in chains, you are in cages -- different sizes of cages, different forms of cages....

But remember one thing: that which has not arisen within you is always some kind of slavery.

The first definition of the enlightened man is PERFECT FREEDOM IN ACTIVE LIFE. He is bound to be condemned, because the crowd gets disturbed. The crowd

gets disturbed because such a man is going to destroy their slavery, which they think is a very cozy and safe lifestyle.

I am reminded of a story.
In a mountainous region, a man of freedom rested for a day in a caravanserai. That caravanserai had a beautiful parrot, and the owner had taught the parrot... The parrot was continuously asking for freedom -- "Freedom!" It was strange....
The stranger, an enlightened man, could not believe this whole thing. Because first you put him in the cage, and then you teach him to repeat "Freedom!" If the owner is honest, he should give him freedom!
In the night, he could not resist. He woke up, opened the door of the parrot's cage, and told the parrot, "Now the doors are open and the whole sky is yours. Get out!"
And the parrot was clinging to the cage, and still shouting loudly, "Freedom, freedom!"
Finally the man said, "This is strange -- the door is open! Why are you clinging to the cage?"
He forced his hand inside, took the parrot out -- it was very unwilling, gave a good fight, scratched his hand -- but the man took the parrot out, and threw it into the sky. Then, feeling a deep relief, he went to sleep. In the morning, the first thing he heard was, "Freedom!"
He looked out and the parrot was inside the cage; the door was still open....

Outside the cage it is such a vast life, one becomes afraid. There are enemies; there will be days that are too cold, there will be nights that are too hot, there will be times you

will have to go hungry. There will be nobody continuously protecting you.
Once you have become accustomed to living in a cage, freedom becomes a very dangerous idea.
Twenty-one countries have decided about me, that I am a dangerous man. I have not killed a single ant in my whole life; I have never used even a paper knife, and the parliaments of twenty-one countries decide that I'm a dangerous man. And nobody asks, "What is the definition of danger? Why is this man dangerous?"
I am not a terrorist, I am not teaching people how to make bombs, I am not an anarchist. But the danger is that I spread the fire of freedom. I wake people up, saying that unless you demand your freedom -- from all kinds of chains, handcuffs, from all kinds of cages -- you can never be a Gautam Buddha. You will never know the joys and the blessings and the ecstasies of freedom. You will never know your own eternity. You will always be afraid of death, not knowing that death is a fiction -- it is very superficial, it occurs only on the surface. Inside, life continues forever and forever.
But to know all this you need freedom. And this freedom is not social or political or economic; this freedom is spiritual. You need to go inside yourself and find that space which has not yet been chained. Finding that space from where your life arises, you will attain enlightenment and freedom together; they are two different names for the same, single experience.
Engo says:
HE IS LIKE A DRAGON SUPPORTED BY DEEP WATERS OR LIKE A TIGER THAT COMMANDS ITS

MOUNTAIN RETREAT. THE MAN WHO IS NOT ENLIGHTENED DRIFTS ABOUT IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE WORLD.

Just watch yourself. What have you been doing in the world? Just drifting like deadwood, no direction, no dimension, no clarity, no vision. Just following a crowd -- not even knowing where you are going, just trusting that the crowd must know: if so many people are going, then we must be right because so many people cannot be wrong. And the reality is, so many people cannot be right! To be right is a very unique experience; to be right is to be enlightened.

Beware of this unconscious calculation that because the whole world is doing something, it must be right; so many people cannot be wrong. This is the arithmetic we have been living. So we stumble, we grope in the darkness; we follow this man, we follow that man, and we never think, "If we are alive, then there must be a source within us -- has to be -- otherwise from where does our life come?" Without knowing this source, even if you are following a buddha you are going to go astray. Because every individual is so unique, you can never follow anybody.

THE MAN WHO IS NOT ENLIGHTENED DRIFTS ABOUT IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE WORLD.

Your life, if it is not enlightened, is nothing but a drifting.

A strange incident happened....

I had gone to enroll in a college, and they gave me a form to fill out. One young man of my age was also holding a form in his hand. He looked at my form and he said, "What subjects are you filling in?"

I said, "That is none of your business. You fill in your subjects."
He said, "I don't know what subjects to fill in."
So he looked at my form, and because I had filled in philosophy, psychology and politics, he filled in the same. I said, "This is very strange."
He said, "No, because I don't know what to do with my life."
We graduated from the same college, and then I changed to the university. And it was such a surprise: when I entered the office that same fellow was waiting there with his form! He said, "You have come! I have been wondering what to do; it has been such a joy to fill in the form according to you. Now what are you going to study for your post-graduation?"
I said, "This is very stupid."
He said, "No, it has been a great relief that at least somebody knows where he is going, and I am following."
So he looked at my form, and filled in his accordingly: philosophy, religion, psychology. I said, "This is not a right way of living. It is becoming a carbon copy."
But he said, "I am perfectly at ease. If you are taking these subjects, they must be the best subjects available in the university."
I said, "I have no objection..."
In one of my post-graduate classes, the professor was a very orthodox brahmin from Bengal -- so orthodox that I have never come across anybody else like him. He would not teach with open eyes because there were two girls in the class: girls he cannot look at, he is a celibate. It was a

good opportunity, so I slept all the time. And he thought that perhaps I was also a great celibate!
So there were those two girls, and this boy who had been following me. The professor was very inquisitive. One day he got hold of me in the library and said, "It is very rare to find people these days who are committed to celibacy."
I said, "You are under a wrong impression."
He said, "Wrong impression?"
I said, "Why are you closing your eyes?"
He said, "I am a celibate and I don't want to see any female face."
I said, "That is true, that is also my reason -- because both those girls are not worth seeing! But it is not celibacy. Day after day, those same two girls; I simply keep my eyes closed."
He said, "My god! We are doing the same action but our reasons are so different."
And that boy was the only other person in the class. He was such a great follower, but he was at a loss for what to do -- to close his eyes because I was closing mine, the professor was closing his and just those two girls... But he was very much interested in those girls, although the girls were not showing any sign of interest in him. He was very disappointed. He told me, "You will have to help me. You have always helped -- since I entered college you have been of great help; now you have to help."
I said, "What is the problem?"
He said, "The problem is that I try in every way to talk to those girls but they don't take any interest in me; they don't even care about me. They pass by me as if I am not there -- it hurts."

I said, "You have to do something rightly."
So I wrote a love letter for him, and I said, "Tomorrow you deliver it yourself."
He said, "This is very dangerous; you have made me sign it. You have written all these things and if I am caught, if the girl freaks out, or anything..."
I said, "You don't be worried; I will prepare the girl, because I have taken the responsibility. That's why I am saying tomorrow you deliver it. Just give me one day's chance to prepare the girl."
I told the girl, "This boy is very poor -- spiritually poor -- he needs compassion."
The girl said, "What can I do?"
I said, "You don't have to do anything. He will deliver a love letter to you tomorrow; you accept it with a smiling face."
She said, "You are creating trouble. I don't like that fellow."
I said, "There is no question of liking or not liking; you can even hate that fellow. But receiving the letter, just like a nice lady... it is not against any manners, any etiquette."
She said, "If you say, I will accept the letter."
Then I said, "It is not the end. You have to write a letter too."
She said, "My god! You are creating trouble for me. If my father comes to know" -- and her father was the collector of that city -- "if he comes to know... He is a dangerous fellow, he can even shoot. He goes on shining his gun every day, and he has told me, `Don't get involved in any love affair; otherwise somebody is going to be shot!'"

I said, "I will prepare your father, you don't be worried. If anybody is going to be shot, I am the fellow who is ready because I have nothing to lose. It is perfectly good, he can shoot me. But you will have to write a letter, because this fellow just needs a hope. Don't write too many sweet things, just..."
She said, "Okay, I will try. But I don't know, I have never written a love letter."
I said, "My god... I will write it." So I wrote a love letter and she signed it.
A few love letters were exchanged and finally the girl came to me to say that, "My father seems to be getting suspicious. You have put me into trouble, because now that boy has at least seven letters signed by me."
I said, "That boy is not a real person, he is a carbon copy. Don't be worried about him. I will take back all your letters."
I told the boy, "Listen, the father of the girl is very dangerous and he keeps polishing his gun."
He said, "My god! And you never told me before? Where does he live?"
I said, "He is a collector and he lives in the city, three or four miles away from the university. But now your life is in danger."
He said, "You wrote those letters..."
I said, "It does not matter who wrote them. What matters is who signed!"
He said, "Now save me somehow, I don't want to get into trouble. If I had known that love means trouble, I would not have fallen in love."

So I said, "You give all those letters back to me." He said, "Then what will happen to my letters which are in the girl's hands?"
I said, "I will take back those letters too."
He said, "Don't forget! because those seven letters will keep me always falling in love. Just I have to copy one letter, because I cannot manage... you have made such beautiful letters. I don't care that the girl is lost, but those letters I would miss my whole life!"
I took back the letters from both sides.
After ten years, I found him in another city. He had become a professor, and he had a wife and children. I said, "You managed perfectly well."
He said, "The whole credit goes to you. Those letters worked miraculously. I tried them on many girls and was refused, but this girl..."
And I saw why this girl... because she was not much of a girl. She even had some moustache growing! I said to him, "You are a fool! You should have at least asked me. I would have managed some other girl. There are so many girls -- the whole world is full of girls, and you are such a nice looking fellow."
He said, "Something is wrong with this girl?"
I said, "It is not a girl at all! Look at her moustache."
I have come across only two women: one was this girl, and one was the daughter of one of my principals; she had a little beard. I think it is perfectly good, there is no harm, but I said to that fellow, "You are an idiot from the very beginning, and without my help you should not have taken this step."

He said, "Now it is too late. I have got three children." All ugly! I told him, "It was absolutely certain that you would do something nasty like this."
He said, "Is there something wrong with my children?"
I said, "Will you ever mature? I don't think so, in this life."
He said, "But everybody says, looking at my children, `How nice they look!'"
I said, "Whenever somebody says to a woman that her child looks very nice, that simply means that the child is ugly."
I told him about an incident that happened in a bus:
A woman was holding her child, and an old drunkard came across, looked very closely at the child, and said, "My god! This must be the ugliest child in the whole world!"
The woman started crying and weeping; these things are not to be said. But a drunk fellow...
The bus was stopped, because the driver said, "It doesn't seem right that the woman is crying." So he went to the woman, and he said, "Don't cry. That fellow was a drunk. And I don't know what he has said to you, but I will bring you a cup of tea."
So he brought a cup of tea and gave it to the woman, and said, "Just drink the tea and forget what that drunkard did. And I have also brought a banana for your monkey."
People never think, what kind of children they are having. That drunkard was at least honest, and the driver was also honest.

But unconscious people go on doing things without any reason and rhyme. The unconscious man is basically a follower in every dimension of life. He doesn't have the sense to find a direction for himself. He is always looking

for somebody to guide him. He is bound to fall into a long dark night which has no end.

One thing has to be decided by every individual -- particularly my people have to decide it -- to find your own life source, to find out what your potentials are, and let them grow. Even if you go against the whole world, at least you will be fulfilled in your freedom. Otherwise you become just driftwood; anybody can give you a shape, anybody can give you a direction, anybody can give you guidelines.

Engo continues:

HE IS LIKE A RAM THAT GETS ITS HORNS CAUGHT IN A FENCE, OR LIKE A MAN WHO WAITS FOR A HARE TO RUN AGAINST A TREE STUMP AND STUN ITSELF.

THE ENLIGHTENED MAN'S WORDS ARE SOMETIMES LIKE A LION CROUCHED TO SPRING, SOMETIMES LIKE THE DIAMOND KING'S TREASURE SWORD. SOMETIMES THEIR EFFECT IS TO SHUT THE MOUTHS OF THE WORLD-FAMED ONES, SOMETIMES IT IS AS IF THEY SIMPLY FOLLOW THE WAVES COMING ONE AFTER ANOTHER.

WHEN THE ENLIGHTENED MAN MEETS OTHERS WHO ARE ENLIGHTENED, THEN FRIEND MEETS FRIEND. HE VALUES THEM, AND THEY ENCOURAGE EACH OTHER... to go even beyond enlightenment.

WHEN HE MEETS THOSE WHO ARE ADRIFT IN THE WORLD, THEN MASTER MEETS DISCIPLE. HIS WAY OF DEALING WITH SUCH PEOPLE IS

FARSIGHTED. HE STANDS FIRM BEFORE THEM, LIKE A THOUSAND-FATHOM CLIFF.
THEREFORE IT IS SAID THAT THE WAY OF THE ABSOLUTE IS MANIFEST EVERYWHERE: IT HAS NO FIXED RULES AND REGULATIONS. THE MASTER SOMETIMES MAKES A BLADE OF GRASS STAND FOR THE GOLDEN-FACED BUDDHA, SIXTEEN FEET HIGH, AND SOMETIMES MAKES THE GOLDEN-FACED BUDDHA, SIXTEEN FEET HIGH, STAND FOR A BLADE OF GRASS.

You all know about a Zen master who was staying in a temple, just for the night. It was a cold night, and in Japan the Buddha statues are made of wood -- in India they are made of marble; you will not find even one single wooden Buddha in India. But in Japan they use wood, and very aesthetically.
There were three Buddhas in the temple, and it was a very cold night, so the master took one Buddha, and built a fire. The priest of the temple lived nearby. He suddenly saw light and fire inside the temple. He came running, he said, "I was from the very beginning suspicious; your every activity seems to be out of tune with others. What have you done? You have burned one of my Buddhas! I gave you shelter, and this is the way you have shown your gratefulness!"
The master took his staff and started looking in the ashes -- Buddha was gone. The priest said, "What are you doing now?"
He said, "I am looking for the bones."

The priest said, "You are really crazy! It was a wooden Buddha, and wood does not have bones."
The master said, "You are intelligent, you can understand. Now look: the night is only half gone and it is so cold. You have two Buddhas more, and while a living buddha is suffering from cold, you are protecting your wooden Buddhas. Just bring one of the Buddhas here!"
The priest just took hold of the master and forced him out of the temple, shouting that "You will destroy my whole temple!"
And in the morning he saw that the same master... just in front of the temple there was a milestone. The master has picked a few wildflowers and has put those wildflowers on the stone, and is sitting in deep meditation by its side.
The priest said, "My god! He has destroyed a Buddha in the night, and now on a milestone he has put flowers as if it is a Buddha -- and next to it he is sitting in deep meditation."
So he came out, shook him and said, "What are you doing?"
He said, "I am worshipping the Buddha. If you can worship wood, what is wrong in worshipping a stone? Your Buddha was a little shapely, a well-cut design. My Buddha is raw. But it is a perfect Buddha as far as meditation is concerned. I can use anything to show my gratitude; the whole existence is one."
A man of enlightened freedom can make A BLADE OF GRASS STAND FOR THE GOLDEN-FACED BUDDHA, SIXTEEN FEET HIGH, AND SOMETIMES MAKES THE GOLDEN-FACED BUDDHA, SIXTEEN FEET HIGH, STAND FOR A BLADE OF GRASS.

He is not confined by any rules and regulations; he is not confined by any etiquette or manners. His freedom is total. He acts out of his spontaneity, love, compassion, but he does not follow any rules. You cannot expect of a buddha that he will do the same thing tomorrow that he did today. He will say, "Today is today, and tomorrow is tomorrow. Today this is my response, in this context; tomorrow the context will be different, and my response is going to be different. I respond to situations not with any prejudice, but with a pure, empty heart."

ON ANOTHER OCCASION, ENGO SAID:
THE UNIVERSE IS NOT VEILED; ALL ITS ACTIVITIES LIE OPEN. WHICHEVER WAY HE MAY GO, THE ENLIGHTENED MAN MEETS NO OBSTRUCTION. AT ALL TIMES HE BEHAVES INDEPENDENTLY. HIS EVERY WORD IS DEVOID OF EGOCENTRICITY, YET STILL HAS THE POWER TO KILL OTHERS.
ONCE THE DELUSIVE WAY OF THINKING IS CUT OFF, A THOUSAND EYES ARE SUDDENLY OPENED. ONE WORD BLOCKING THE STREAM OF THOUGHT, AND ALL NON-ACTIONS ARE CONTROLLED. IS THERE ANYONE WHO WOULD UNDERGO THE EXPERIENCE OF DYING THE SAME DEATH AND LIVING THE SAME LIFE AS THE BUDDHA? TRUTH IS MANIFEST EVERYWHERE.
The enlightened man lives a life of freedom; he also dies a death of utter freedom. Neither life can make him a slave, nor death.

Gautam Buddha himself, one day in the early morning twenty-five centuries ago, told Ananda, "Call all the monks together under those two saal trees" -- which he always loved; he used to sit under those saal trees for meditations or for his talks. He said, "Arrange a bed for me under those saal trees because I am going to leave the body. And inform everybody that if they want to ask any question, they should ask."

All the monks gathered, they had tears in their eyes. But Buddha said, "Tears won't help. If you have any question you can ask, because tomorrow I will not be here."

The elder, enlightened disciples said, "You have spoken for forty-two years; you have said everything that is needed for a seeker. We don't have any question; just relax peacefully."

So Buddha closed his eyes. He said, "First I will leave the body, then I will leave the mind, then I will leave the heart and disappear into emptiness."

A man from the nearby town, who had been postponing for thirty years because Buddha was coming and going through his town again and again... he wanted to meet Buddha, he wanted to ask something, but there was always some excuse -- a customer suddenly came, and now he cannot leave the shop, or his wife is sick, or some other business, or he has to go to somebody's marriage. So many times Buddha passed through the town, and he had the idea to meet him.

He suddenly heard that Buddha was going to die. Now no excuse could prevent him. He rushed to the outside of the city where Buddha's campus was. And he went there and said, "I want to ask one question!"

Ananda said, "Now we have told him there is no question, and he has closed his eyes. We don't know how far he has gone, but we cannot call him back. It will be too ungrateful. He has passed through your town so many times, what were you doing?"
He said, "Always some excuse..."
But Buddha opened his eyes. He said, "Ananda, let him ask the question so that in the coming centuries nobody can blame me that somebody asked a question and I did not answer."
"But," Ananda said, "you were almost dead!"
He said, "Almost, but not completely. I had left the body, I had left the mind; I was just going to leave the heart when I heard. It does not matter if I delay a little more before disappearing into the ultimate emptiness, but this poor fellow should not remain unanswered."

A Buddha lives in freedom in his life, and lives in freedom even in his death. Death for him is just an episode like other episodes of life.

Kanzan wrote:
PEOPLE ASK THE WAY TO COLD MOUNTAIN.
COLD MOUNTAIN? THERE IS NO ROAD THAT GOES THROUGH.
EVEN IN SUMMER THE ICE DOESN'T MELT.
THOUGH THE SUN COMES OUT, THE FOG IS BLINDING.
HOW CAN YOU HOPE TO GET THERE BY APING ME?
YOUR HEART AND MINE ARE NOT ALIKE.

## IF YOUR HEART WERE THE SAME AS MINE, THEN YOU COULD JOURNEY TO THE VERY CENTER!

Kanzan is saying that followers are not needed. Following is a kind of aping, it is not human. But there is a different way of being with a master and that is to bring your heartbeat in tune with his heartbeat. Then you can travel as a fellow traveler to the ultimate center of existence. This can be remembered as a criterion: if anybody tries to be your master, in a very subtle way he is trying to impose a slavery on you.

The authentic master is master of himself. He does not want followers, he wants friends, fellow companions, fellow travelers, who are ready to be in tune with his heart, in tune with his emptiness. The people who pretend to be masters and are followed by others... they even count!

I met one shankaracharya and he asked me immediately, "How many people follow your philosophy?"

I said, "Neither do I have any philosophy, nor have I met any follower. I have friends all around the world. At the most I can say that I am in love with thousands of people. Their hearts have come to a certain synchronicity with me but they are not my followers."

But that old shankaracharya said, "Unless you have followers, a great following, you cannot be counted as a great master." He said, "I myself have five thousand followers."

I said, "You can believe that you are a great master, but according to me you are a great slave-creator. You are taking people's freedom. You cannot be a compassionate

sympathizer; you are really bragging about your followers the same way somebody brags about his money, somebody brags about his political power. You are not an authentic master."

That night in Firozabad I had to speak. The shankaracharya had called a meeting and he had invited me, not knowing much about me. And in the morning in the discussion it became clear that he had been absolutely wrong in inviting me because on every point I discussed with him I had told him, "You are absolutely wrong."

In the meeting that night -- there must have been at least fifty thousand people there -- he had arranged for four criminals to be standing behind me, so that if I said anything against the tradition or scriptures, then they should immediately put out the light and hit me as much as they could.

But his secretary became a little worried, so he came to me just as I was leaving for the meeting. He said, "This is the situation. My suggestion is that you should not go, because this is his sheer violent mind. He could not win on a single point in the morning discussion" -- and it was a small group of his great disciples. "It is very risky for you to go."

I said, "Don't be worried." When I arrived I told the people gathered there, "You see the four persons standing behind me? These are all criminals, they belong to your town and you know perfectly well who they are. What can be the purpose for them to stand behind me? Their plan is that the moment I start speaking they will put the lights off and hit me or kill me. What do you want? Should I start? Just raise your hands! I don't care about my life; I only care about my freedom. If you are ready to listen, then at any risk I am

going to speak. But you can see this violence in the mind of your shankaracharya. These are his people."
Those fifty thousand people raised their hands, and shouted that I should speak, and "If anything happens to you the shankaracharya will not leave the stage alive."
I spoke, and I hit him as hard as possible. Those four criminals -- everybody recognized them; they were from the town -- simply disappeared, because this was very dangerous; now they could not put the lights off. Fifty thousand people were with me.
And they were all really the shankaracharya's people, but they could see that this was sheer violence; it did not show the intelligence or wisdom of an old shankaracharya. It showed his stupidity. If he could not answer he should accept defeat, but this is not the way to behave. And he had invited me to come -- from Bombay I went to his place. I was alone, all the people were his people, but even his people could see that this was not the way of any enlightened person.

The enlightened person is not violent. And to make somebody a disciple, according to me, is a very subtle violence. You are destroying that person's individuality. You are taking his freedom in your hands.
In this place everybody is an individual; nobody is superior and nobody is inferior. This is a gathering of people who are in love, of people who are in an inquiry for truth. This kind of gathering has disappeared from the world. You are living these moments here with me -- it is almost the same climate as Gautam Buddha created, the same climate as Mahakashyapa created. It is a different air, it is an air

where everybody's potential is respected, loved. Where everybody's freedom is the ultimate value.

Question 1

Maneesha has asked a question:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
I FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT TO DISIDENTIFY FROM MY FEELINGS THAN FROM MY THOUGHTS. IT SEEMS THAT THIS IS BECAUSE MY FEELINGS ARE MORE ROOTED IN MY BODY.
ARE FEELINGS CLOSER TO THE HEAD, IN FACT, THAN TO THE EMPTY HEART?

This is a fallacy created by the poets. Your thoughts, your feelings, your emotions, your sentiments, all are centered in your head. It is just a fallacy to think that your feelings are in the heart. Your heart is just a blood pumping station. When we are talking about the empty heart, we are really talking about the empty mind. Buddha has used the word `heart' instead of mind because mind has become associated with the idea that it is only the process of thinking, and the process of feeling is in the heart, and the heart is deeper.

These ideas have been created by the poets. But the truth is, you can call it empty mind or you can call it empty heart; it is the same. Emptiness -- you are just a watcher and all around there is nothing with which you are identified, there is nothing to which you are clinging. This non-clinging watchfulness is the empty mind, no-mind, or empty heart. These are simply words. The real thing is emptiness -- of all thoughts, feelings, sentiments, emotions. Only a single point of witnessing remains.

And you will find it difficult. Disidentifying from thoughts is easier because thoughts are more superficial. Disidentifying from the feelings is a little difficult because they are deeper, and they are rooted more in your biology, in your chemistry, in your hormones. Thoughts are just floating clouds. They are not rooted in your chemistry, in your biology, in your physiology, in your hormones, they are just floating clouds without any roots. But feelings have roots, so it is difficult to uproot them.

It is easy to become watchful about the theory of relativity. It is difficult to be a witness of your anger, your love, your greed, your ambition. The reason is they are rooted more deeply in the body. But if you can disidentify yourself from the body, there is no difficulty.

And, Maneesha, being a woman it is a little more difficult. There are differences between men and women....

Mulla Nasruddin was reading his newspaper and suddenly called his wife and said, "I have caught four flies: two are males and two are females."

The wife said, "My god, how did you manage to know their sex?"

He said, "Easy! Two were reading the newspaper with me for hours. And two were sitting on the mirror, completely glued."

So it is a little difficult. But witnessing is such a sharp sword -- it cuts thoughts, feelings, emotions, in a single blow. And you know it by experience now: as you go deeper in your meditation, the body is left far behind, the emotions, the thoughts... only the witnessing remains. That is your authentic nature. The emptiness of the buddha's

heart... when you are so empty, you are one with the Buddha. You are one with all the buddhas of all times, past, present, future.

Question 2
Another question:
BELOVED MASTER,
RECENTLY, I SAID I FELT AWARE OF AN EMPTINESS INSIDE, AND HOW STRANGE IT WAS TO RELATE TO LIFE FEELING LIKE THAT. YOU SUGGESTED I ACT ALL THOSE THINGS ONE HAS TO DO IN EVERYDAY LIFE.
WHEN I DON'T REMEMBER TO ACT, MOST OF MY COMMUNICATION WITH PEOPLE -- TO A GREATER OR LESSER EXTENT -- FEELS SOMETHING LIKE ENGO'S RAM WITH ITS HORNS ENTANGLED IN A FENCE.
BUT, REMEMBERING TO ACT, I FEEL DISENGAGED FROM PEOPLE; THERE IS A DISTANCE FROM PEOPLE, AND SO THEY DON'T AFFECT ME. YET CURIOUSLY, THE BETTER I ACT AS IF I AM LOVING, THE MORE LOVING I FEEL.
CAN YOU EXPLAIN THIS?

It is part of hypnotizing yourself. This is an ancient strategy: "Act as if you love." That "as if" will be forgotten soon and you will start thinking that you love. But this love is the love of the hypocrite.
I don't want you to begin with "as if." Just be the buddha -- why "as if?"

Look at Sardar Gurudayal Singh. Do you think he is laughing "as if?" This is a spontaneity. I am not telling you to do anything as an actor. Be authentic, be honest, be totally sincere whatever the consequence, but never move from your center of truthfulness.
Now Gurudayal Singh has laughed and I have to tell a joke. He starts it and I cannot disappoint him.

"What are those two insects doing, Daddy?" asks Little Gertrude, who is walking around the garden with her father.
"Well," mumbles her father, "you remember what I told you about the birds and the bees? That's what they are doing."
"But they are not birds and bees," protests Gertrude.
"I know," says her father, "they are called Daddy Long Legs."
"Oh!" says Gertrude, thinking for a while. "So that means," she continues, "that the one underneath is a Mommy Long Legs, and the one on top is Daddy Long Legs."
"No, it's not quite like that, dear," replies her father, "they are both Daddy Long Legs."
Gertrude thinks again for a moment, and then stomps on the insects.
"Why did you do that?" asks her surprised father.
"Why?" repeats Gertrude. "I'm not having that sort of thing in my garden!"

There is a Saturday night shoot-out in the O.K. Saloon, and the air is thick with lead bullets.

Suddenly, the doors swing open, and in walks a man who strides straight across the room and up to the bar.
Immediately, all the shooting stops.
The barman pops his head up from behind the counter.
"Friend," he says, "that took real courage to walk through those blazing guns without even looking left or right!"
"Not at all," replies the man, looking around, casually.
"You see, I owe money to everyone here!"

Olga Kowalski comes bouncing enthusiastically downstairs in her new Kung Fu outfit.
Kowalski takes one look at her, and puts his hand over his face.
"Good God, Olga!" groans Kowalski. "Now what are you doing?"
"I'm taking Kung Fu lessons," says Olga, proudly -- and she playfully slices the air with her hand, giving Kowalski a punch on the neck.
"It is just in case," explains Olga, "some sex-fiend tries to rape me on some dark night."
"Why bother?" remarks Kowalski, slurping his beer. "It will never get that dark!"

"And Miss Willing, is this the man," screams the clever lawyer Boris Babblebrain, and pointing, "who you claim has violated you, and forcibly taken advantage of your hot, naked, helpless, female body?"
"Yes! Yes!" shouts Miss Willing, excitedly. "That is the man who did it to me!"

"And please tell the court," continues Babblebrain, his nose in the air as he strides over to the jury, "just when did this carnal and erotically perverse act occur?"
"Yes, sir," replies Miss Willing. "As I remember, it was last June... and July, and August!"

Nivedano...

Nivedano...

Be silent, close your eyes.
Let your body be completely frozen.
Look inwards, just as a witness.
The mind is there, the body is there, but you are neither the mind nor the body. You are just a watcher, a pure witness.
This witnessing is the way to your life sources.
The deeper witnessing becomes, the farther away is the mind, the body; the deeper you go, the closer you come to an illumination, to an explosion of light.
Suddenly you recognize, you are a buddha.
All around is emptiness. Just at the center
you are the buddha, the watcher.

Nivedano...

Relax, to make it completely clear that the body is separate, the mind is separate, you are only the witness. In life, in death, everywhere you are a witness.
This witness never dies.
It is your eternity.
This is your buddha.

Remember it -- you have only forgotten.
It is not an achievement, it is just a remembrance. Hence it is easy to carry it around the clock doing all kinds of things, actions, gestures... you can still allow a small stream of remembrance that you are a buddha. But remember it is not `as if'.
The buddha is your authentic nature.

Nivedano...

Come back, but don't come the way you have gone in. Come with a new grandeur, with a new grace, with a new bliss... with a taste of your authentic nature.
You have been to your own roots and those roots go deep down into the universe. Now you are becoming acquainted with the path... it will become deeper every day, more and more, as you gather courage, as you start feeling more peace, more silence, more transformation.
Your remembrance of being a buddha will continue, sitting, walking, waking or sleeping. This is the greatest treasure you can find in the universe -- this empty heart of the buddha.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Can we celebrate the buddhas' gathering?
Yes!